

Listening comprehension worksheet

by Jennifer Kerr

For the article:

Groundhog Day

Read On, February issue 2025, page 5



Topics: US • traditions

Skills: vocabulary • grammar • listening comprehension • speaking

Answers: see page 8

Pre-listening

 Work with a partner.

The article you are going to listen to is about Groundhog Day in the US. But what is a groundhog? Try to answer the following quiz questions in pairs. Then check the answers at the bottom of the page.

- a) What is a groundhog?
 - ☐ a reptile
 - ☐ a mammal
 - ☐ a bird

- b) What is another name for a groundhog?
 - ☐ beaver
 - ☐ capybara
 - ☐ woodchuck

- c) Where can groundhogs be found?
 - ☐ North America
 - ☐ South America
 - ☐ Europe

- d) What do groundhogs eat?
 - ☐ mostly fish
 - ☐ mostly wild grasses and other vegetation
 - ☐ mostly insects

- e) Which of these statements about groundhogs is true?
 - ☐ A groundhog has only two teeth.
 - ☐ A groundhog doesn't chew its food.
 - ☐ A groundhog's teeth never stop growing.

- f) Do groundhogs hibernate over winter?
 - ☐ yes
 - ☐ no

Quiz Answers
a) a mammal
b) woodchuck
c) North America
d) mostly wild grasses and other vegetation
e) A groundhog's teeth never stop growing.
f) yes

Vocabulary

Below are some words and expressions used in the article. Match the English words on the left with the German translations on the right. Write your answers in the boxes below the table.

English	German
a) quirky	A pelzig
b) furry	B Winterschlaf halten
c) rodent	C Aufzeichnung
d) folklore	D Genauigkeitsrate
e) to hibernate	E skurriel
f) to emigrate to ...	F Volksglauben
g) nap	G Vorhersage
h) record	H Nagetier
i) prediction	I Nickerchen
j) accuracy rate	J nach ... auswandern

a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)	g)	h)	i)	j)

Grammar

Below are the first two paragraphs of the article you are going to hear, but there are some grammar mistakes. Find and highlight the mistakes, then write the corrections on the right. There are eight mistakes in total (a–h). Work individually, and then check in pairs.

- 1 Every year at February 2 in the US, a certain furry rodent is the star of _____(a)
the show: the groundhog. Legend has it that what the groundhog do on _____(b)
the day means spring will begin – or won't come before another six weeks. _____(c)
- 2 According the folklore, if a groundhog comes out of the hole where it's _____(d)
been hibernating and sees its own shadow – which can only happen if its _____(e)
a sunny day – it would return to its hole, and the weather will remain cold _____(f)
and winterly for six more week. If it's cloudy that day, the groundhog won't _____(g)
have a shadow. That means it will be stay outside, and spring will begin. _____(h)

Listening comprehension

1. Listen to the article once all the way through. Then answer the following questions based on the information given in the article. You just need to write short answers.

a) What is a groundhog?

b) Where does the most popular Groundhog Day festival take place?

c) Name two animals that did the predicting in Europe.

d) Which is more accurate: Punxsutawney Phil or a flipped coin?

2. Now listen to the article again, focusing on the numbers. Complete the following sentences using the numbers in the table.

4	1800	36
40	2	1841
1993	6	1887

- a) Groundhog Day is celebrated on February _____.
- b) The film Groundhog Day is from the year _____.
- c) Many people from German-speaking parts of Europe emigrated to Pennsylvania from the late 1600s to the early _____s.
- d) According to folklore in Europe, if the animal goes back into hibernation, there will be another _____ weeks of cold weather, whereas in the US it is _____ weeks.
- e) Lichtmess, or Candlemas, is a Christian holiday which marks the _____th day after Christ's birth and the end of the Christmas season.
- f) The first time the tradition of Groundhog Day was mentioned in North America was in _____.
- g) The most famous groundhog in America is Punxsutawney Phil, and he has been around since _____.
- h) Punxsutawney Phil does not have a good record of correct predictions. He is only right around _____ per cent of the time.

3. Now decide if the following statements are true (T), false (F), or not mentioned (N) in the article.

	Statement	T	F	N
a)	A groundhog is a rodent.	O	O	O
b)	Groundhog Day is celebrated in Australia.	O	O	O
c)	If it's sunny on Groundhog Day, that means spring will begin.	O	O	O
d)	Punxsutawney is a big city.	O	O	O

e)	Lots of people from France have emigrated to Pennsylvania.	☐	☐	☐
f)	In Europe, the weather predictions were done by a badger or a hedgehog.	☐	☐	☐
g)	Candlemas marks the end of the Christmas season.	☐	☐	☐
h)	The first mention of Groundhog Day in North America was in the 18th century.	☐	☐	☐

4. Answer the following questions in full sentences. The first two questions (a and b) relate to the article, and the last two (c and d) relate to the additional material about Pennsylvania Dutch Country. Try to answer the questions without looking at or listening to the texts again.

a) Explain in your own words what Groundhog Day is.

b) Explain the link to farming.

c) Why is Pennsylvania Dutch Country a big tourist attraction?

d) What does the “Dutch” part of the name “Pennsylvania Dutch” mean?

Speaking

 Work with a partner.

Tongue-twisters are a good way to practice English pronunciation. There is a well-known tongue-twister about a groundhog, or woodchuck.

a) Take it in turns to try and say this sentence as fast as you can.

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

b) Then try the same with these other tongue-twisters:

- *She sells seashells on the seashore.*
- *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.*
- *I saw a kitten eating chicken in the kitchen.*
- *If a dog chews shoes, whose shoes does he choose?*

c) Do you understand the meaning of each tongue-twister? Discuss with your partner.

d) Which tongue twisters did you find most difficult to say?

Post-listening

 Work with a group.

1. Discuss the following questions:

- a) Had you heard of Groundhog Day before listening to this article? Have you ever celebrated it?
- b) Can you think of any similar festivals in Europe that are related to the turning of the seasons and farming?
- c) Why do you think people in Pennsylvania Dutch Country refuse to use modern technology like cars or electricity? Could you imagine living like that? What would you miss the most?

- d) Have you heard anyone speak Pennsylvania Dutch?
Listen to the following snippet of a video to hear some Pennsylvania Dutch, and find out how much of the language you can understand. Click on the link, and listen from 1:40 to 2:30. Then discuss how easy or difficult it was to understand the language.
You can then continue to watch until the end of the video to hear the translation if you wish.



<https://youtu.be/BKHeA6g-c80?feature=shared&t=100>

➡ Work with a partner.

2. Now click on the link below, and watch the trailer for the 1993 film **Groundhog Day**, which is mentioned in this article.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GncQtURdcE4>

Then discuss the following questions:

- a) Did you find the trailer easy to understand? Why or why not?
- b) Did you understand the plot of the film? Talk about the plot with your partner.
- c) Would you be interested in watching this film? Why or why not?

Answer key

Vocabulary

a) E • b) A • c) H • d) F • e) B • f) J • g) I • h) C • i) G • j) D

Grammar

a) at → on • b) do → does • c) before → for • d) According → According to • e) its → it's (it is) • f) would return → will return • g) week → weeks • h) it will be stay → it will stay

Listening comprehension

1. a) a furry rodent • b) Punxsutawney • c) badger and hedgehog • d) a flipped coin

2. a) 2 • b) 1993 • c) 1800 • d) 4, 6 • e) 40 • f) 1841 • g) 1887 • h) 36

3. a) True (para. 1) • b) Not mentioned • c) False (para. 2) • d) False (para. 3) • e) Not mentioned • f) True (para. 5) • g) True (para. 7) • h) False (para. 10)

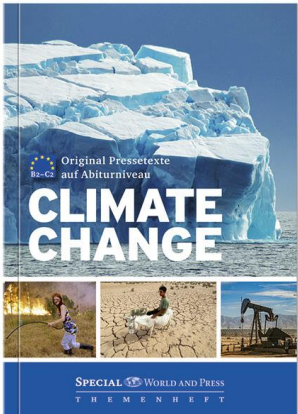
4. Sample answers:

a) Groundhog Day is a festival celebrated in the US. It has its origins in European folklore. On February 2 (Candlemas), a groundhog comes out of its burrow, where it has been hibernating. Legend says that if it's sunny and the groundhog has a shadow, it will go back into its burrow, and there will be another six weeks of wintry weather. However, if the groundhog has no shadow, it will stay outside, and spring will begin. • b) The Groundhog Day tradition's link to farming is that farmers have for a long time used animals to help them understand when the weather will turn warmer after winter and therefore when they should start planting their crops. • c) Pennsylvania Dutch Country is a big tourist attraction because people are interested in seeing how the Amish live their lives without any modern technology. It is also interesting for visitors because the Amish speak a language there that is different from English. • d) Pennsylvania Dutch is a language which is based on an old version of German but which now includes some English words. "Dutch" was a word that was used to refer to German speakers.

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Hinweis: Die Zugangsdaten zu Ihrem persönlichen Abo dürfen Sie nicht an Dritte weitergeben.



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