



BLUE MONDAY



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:

13I5-T2CE-5KP4



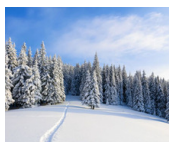
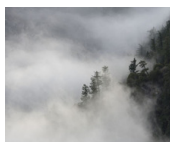
1

Warm up

What activities are you usually doing at these times of year? How do you usually feel at these times of year?

1. January
2. March
3. May
4. July
5. September
6. December

What feelings do you associate with these kinds of weather?



- Rain
- Fog
- Snow
- Clear blue sky and sunshine
- Cold days
- Windy days



2

Understanding vocabulary

Part A: Match the vocabulary to the correct definition.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. hemisphere (n) | a. anything which stops the negative effects of something |
| 2. anxiety (n) | b. eat all of something very quickly, usually because of being very hungry |
| 3. devour (v) | c. feeling particularly worried that something bad is going to happen |
| 4. trivialise (v) | d. getting annoyed or angry quickly and easily |
| 5. suicidal (adj.) | e. having feelings of wanting to kill yourself |
| 6. irritable (adj.) | f. having no useful qualities or skills |
| 7. worthless (adj.) | g. make something seem smaller or less important than it actually is |
| 8. antidote (n) | h. one half of the earth. Often the half above or below the equator |

Part B: Now put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences.

1. I'm going to stop drinking coffee. It doesn't help me feel awake any more. It just makes me feel tense and _____.
2. I'm flying to Argentina next month on business. I'm really excited. It'll actually be my first trip to the southern _____.
3. He hoped to sell his car, but then his son hit a tree. Now it's practically _____. He is so angry!
4. I find meditation to be the perfect _____ to the stress of modern life.
5. She was up late revising again last night. I'm worried because I think her exams are causing her a lot of _____.
6. I swear the first thing I'm going to do when this vegan diet we're doing is over, is to go and _____ a cheeseburger!
7. If you're dealing with depression or having _____ thoughts, there are people you can talk to. Please don't suffer in silence.
8. Telling her to smile and cheer up doesn't help at all. You'll just _____ her depression. She needs to be listened to.



Now answer the following questions.

1. What kind of food are you most likely to **devour**?
2. Do you own anything that is really important to you, but **worthless** in terms of what it could be sold for? What is it? Why is it important to you?
3. If you live in the northern hemisphere, where would you like to visit in the southern **hemisphere**? And vice versa?
4. What do you do as an **antidote** to feeling unhappy or down?
5. What situations cause, or have caused, you **anxiety**?
6. What would you say to someone who was feeling **suicidal**?
7. Has anyone **trivlised** anything you've done? What happened?
8. What do other people do that makes you feel **irritable**?

**3****Before you read**

Scan through the text and find synonyms or phrases that mean the same as the following.

1. _____ unhappiness (n., paragraph 3)
2. _____ spend less money (idiom, paragraph 3)
3. _____ beginning (n., paragraph 5)
4. _____ labelling (v., paragraph 5)
5. _____ subconscious (adj., paragraph 5)
6. _____ negatively (adv., paragraph 7)
7. _____ sadness (n., paragraph 7)
8. _____ inventing (v., paragraph 8)



Blue Monday

the saddest day of the year?

1. Blue Monday, supposedly the saddest day of the year, takes place on the third Monday in January. Why is it so sad? Well, there are several factors involved.
2. Firstly, for a large part of the world, the holiday season is officially over. The lights have gone, the decorations are down and, for many of those in the northern hemisphere, they are replaced with cold, damp, grey weather.
3. To add to the gloom, following the increase in spending for the end of year celebrations, levels of debt are most likely to be up at this time. This means you may be having to tighten your belt around a waist that is likely to be a little more wobbly than usual.
4. In addition, many people who have made New Year's resolutions will, statistically, have broken them by this point. The hope that began the year has, for many, been overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety and frustration as they helplessly devour the last of the 'festive' chocolate biscuits while, once again, not going to the gym.
5. However, since its inception in 2004 by psychologist Cliff Arnall, 'Blue Monday' has been met with a certain amount of backlash from mental healthcare professionals. Clinical depression is a serious illness that will likely affect around one person out of every six. Many feel that designating a day in January, where everyone feels depressed, trivialises an issue that severely impacts a significant number of people in all aspects of their lives all year. Those who experience depression may have suicidal thoughts, problems with sleeping, and a deep-seated feeling of being disconnected from others.
6. There are also a substantial number of people who suffer from S.A.D, or Seasonal Affective Disorder. This largely affects people during the months when lack of sunlight is more likely, leaving them depressed, irritable and feeling worthless.
7. Again, symptoms of this adversely affect millions around the world each year for many months, so the implication that we can just feel down for one day and get over it, is upsetting to many. Not least because some companies have used it as an excuse to sell their products as an antidote to the blues.
8. Arnall himself has since publicly apologised for coining the term and done much work to ensure positive work is done year-round. Nonetheless, the idea has stuck.
9. On a positive note, it is a good chance to acknowledge and discuss mental health more openly. It is often an issue, due to its very nature, that people struggle with in private.

Sources: BBC, The Independent, Mental Health Foundation, National Today



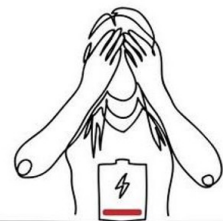


4

Understanding the text

Complete the following sentences with no more than three words from the text.

1. One of the reasons for Blue Monday, is that by the third Monday in January, _____ has ended and so has the joy that goes with it.
2. Not only that, but the lack of exercise and the over-eating may be showing in your _____.
3. Often, by this point in January, the optimism they felt at the beginning of the year will have been replaced by cold weather and broken _____.
4. Some _____ have objected to Blue Monday, saying that it reduces the importance of clinical depression which is a very serious issue for many.
5. Those who suffer from depression may experience thoughts of suicide, a sense of disconnection from others and _____.
6. Seasonal Affective Disorder often affects people during the darker months and can cause depression, feelings of worthlessness and a tendency to feel _____.
7. With Blue Monday comes the _____ that depression and S.A.D are something that people can get over in a day, which doesn't help.
8. Cliff Arnall, the creator of the Blue Monday concept, has distanced himself from it and apologised, but the idea has persisted _____.



**5****Talking point**

In pairs or groups, discuss the following questions.

A: What situations or events do you think are mostly likely to cause depression and anxiety in people?

Write down five likely causes.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

B: What advice can you give to someone suffering from depression? Write down five pieces of advice you could give to a friend who told you they were depressed.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

C: What can you do yourself, even if you are not suffering from poor mental health, to ensure that you stay in a healthy state of mind? Write down five ideas.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
