

the ARTICLE (for instructors)

Stop Picking on Santa

Do-gooders and political correctness fanatics have gone too far. They've picked on Santa Clause and the Christmas tradition. For hundreds of years, jolly Santa has worked hard, persuaded his elves to complete the toys by the December deadline, and checked his naughty and nice list twice. On Christmas Eve, he has managed without fail to circle the globe and visit every home. His "ho ho ho!" echoes through the night, while his belly jiggles like a bowl full of jelly. But now, some have suggested that an overweight Santa provides an unhealthy image for kids. Equally ridiculous, "ha ha ha!" may be better than "ho ho ho!" because the latter terms means "prostitute" in American slang.

Let's face it: It's mom and dad's eating habits, not Santa's, that influence children. And although many First World countries are facing more and more obese children, which then creates alarming health problems, few kids want to have a large stomach because of Santa Clause. Parents and educators should take more responsibility for the diets of the young. Healthy choices should be recommended and regularly eaten.

Equally troublesome are the attacks on Santa's laugh. Although "ho" may have a negative meaning, only an adult would understand the reference. It's American slang as well, so kids (and possibly adults) elsewhere in the world won't likely understand the problem. If a child still believes in the big guy, the boy or girl will only associate "ho ho ho!" with Santa's laugh.

Will this madness never end? Leave Santa Clause's weight and laugh alone.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in **red typeface** are the answers.

the ARTICLE (for students)

Stop Picking on Santa!

Do-gooders and political correctness fanatics have gone too far. They've picked on Santa Clause and the Christmas tradition. For hundreds of years, jolly Santa has worked hard, a) _____, and checked his naughty and nice list twice. On Christmas Eve, he has managed without fail to circle the globe and visit every home. His "ho ho ho!" echoes through the night, while his belly jiggles like a bowl full of jelly. eb _____ . Equally ridiculous, "ha ha ha!" may be better than "ho ho ho!" because the latter terms means "prostitute" in American slang.

Let's face it: It's mom and dad's eating habits, not Santa's, that influence children. And although many First World countries are facing more and more obese children, which then creates alarming health problems, few kids want to have a large stomach because of Santa Clause. c) _____ . Healthy choices should be recommended and regularly eaten.

Equally troublesome are the attacks on Santa's laugh. Although "ho" may have a negative meaning, only an adult would understand the reference. It's American slang as well, d) _____ . If a child still believes in the big guy, the boy or girl will only associate "ho ho ho!" with Santa's laugh.

Will this madness never end? e) _____ .

Notes:

STEP ONE

Discuss: Do you agree or disagree? Why?

a.	Santa is an important part of Christmas.
b.	Because Santa Clause is overweight, kids want to be overweight, too.
c.	Political correctness is a good thing.
d.	Santa's image needs to be updated for our modern society.
e.	Christmas, Santa, and presents are a waste of time.

STEP TWO

Questions: Read as much of the article as you can in two minutes. Guess the answers to the questions below, then listen to your teacher read the article. Try to confirm your answers.

a.	Some people think Santa's image isn't healthy.	T / F
b.	Kids will be influenced by an obese Santa Clause.	T / F
c.	If parents don't eat well, then their children will be similarly unhealthy.	T / F
d.	Santa's laugh could have a negative meaning in American slang.	T / F
e.	The author of the article supports the changes.	T / F

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

STEP FOUR

Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

STEP FIVE

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	What do you think about do-gooders? How about in this instance? Why?
b.	What would you do if Santa's image were changed? Why?
c.	Is Santa's current image harmful to children? Why/not?
d.	Which has a greater influence on children, parents, educators, or the media? Why do you think so?