



May

201

Hatching a Story

May is National Egg Month. Finish this eggs-cellent tale. “The egg was light blue, the size of a football, and had red and yellow spots. It began to crack and out popped . . .”

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Jumbo Burger

May is National Hamburger Month. Imagine that you have opened a new restaurant called Jumbo Burger. Make up a menu listing all the different things you would offer, and don't forget to give the prices. Maybe there would be a Triple Jumbo Burger with cheese—\$1.75. Or a Wacky Meal with fries—\$2.50. Create your own mouth-watering Jumbo Burger menu.

203

Nursery Rhyme Time

May 1 is Mother Goose Day. When you were younger, did you have a favorite nursery rhyme—Humpty-Dumpty, maybe, or Old Mother Hubbard? Maybe you have a younger brother or sister who enjoys nursery rhymes. Create a nursery rhyme and make it lots of fun for little kids.

204

Uniforms

When you write stories, it may be useful to know how to describe various uniforms. For example, firefighters wear boots and hats and long slickers. Look in a book or magazine and find an interesting person wearing a uniform. Describe that uniform as carefully as you can.

205

Imaginary Pen Friend

Pen Friends Week is May 1 through 7. Imagine that you have a pen friend in a faraway country—Russia or Egypt or Brazil. Do some research on that country at the library or on the Internet. Think of some questions you'd like to ask about that country, and put them in a letter to your imaginary pen friend. Remember to give your pen friend a name that matches with the country he or she is from.

206

Loyalty Day

May 1 is Loyalty Day by a special presidential proclamation. Do you think loyalty is important? Write a story about a loyal friend or a loyal pet.

207

Backpacking

How about playing a game called Backpacking? Think of a person's name and an item that starts with the same letter. Now, work your way through the alphabet, A to Z. This will get you started. "My name is Alice. I'm going backpacking and I'm taking an anteater."

208

Weather Report

May 4 is National Weather Observer's Day. How does the weather look? What is your prediction for tomorrow? What will the temperature be? Will it be windy? Will there be any rain? Write a weather report with your predictions for the next five days.



209

Wacky Critter

Some real-life animals have very strange names, such as *orangutans* and *koala bears*. Make up a weird and wacky animal of your own and describe what it looks like, where it lives, and what it eats.



210

Spinning a Yarn

Imagine a character named Kelly Kitten. Write down ten different sentences about Kelly. Make sure that you write each sentence on a separate line. Now, cut out each of the ten sentences. Then, tape them together, one after the other. You will have a single, long, skinny story. It should look something like a piece of yarn that Kelly the Kitten might play with.

211

Cinco de Mayo

In Mexico, May 5 is called *Cinco de Mayo*. It's a big national celebration, with music and dancing and food. Do some research at the library or on the Internet. Then, make a list of ten facts about Mexico.

212

Short Month, Long List

May is the month with the shortest name—only three letters long. Many other words have only three letters such as *bat* and *hat* and *dot*. Make a long list with all the three-letter words you can think of. Write a story using at least ten of your words.

213

Inventory

An *inventory* is a list of all the items in a particular place. For example, an inventory of a room might include “bed, dresser, mirror, shoes,” and so on. Pick a place: your house, your classroom, a store. Then, create an inventory. Think hard and try to list everything that you can think of.



214

“Scooter Wins By a Claw . . .”

Each year on May 5, a lobster race is held in the town of Aiken, South Carolina. Sounds pretty strange, doesn't it? Write a sports story about an exciting race between five lobsters named Scooter, Shelly, Bubbles, Red, and Clawdius.

215

Greetings from Fiji

National Postcard Week starts on May 7. Pretend you are visiting the coolest place you can imagine: the Fiji Islands, or China, maybe. Do some research on this very cool country. Then, write a postcard to a friend from this place. If you like, you can also draw a picture on the front of the postcard.



216

Lisa's Lemonade

May 10 is National Small Business Day. If you could start a small business, what would it be: a lemonade stand, maybe, or a lawn mowing service? Give your business a snappy name and create an advertisement. Remember, you want your ad to be exciting and full of information so that people will want to use your business.

217

Idiom's Delight

“I aced that test.” The English language is full of these kinds of colorful phrases. They're called *idioms*. You don't take them literally. *Acing a test* doesn't mean turning a test into a playing card, right? It means scoring really high—high like an ace. Now, fill in the blank and create five of your own idioms. “I _____ that test.” For example, “I sewered that test” could mean you did really, really poorly.

218

Tacofest

May 12 and 13 is Picklefest in Atkins, Arkansas. There's a pickle-eating contest and a pickle beauty contest and all kinds of other silly events. Think up your own silly festival. It can be anything: Mushroomfest, Tacofest, or Sausagefest. List ten events that you would have at your festival.



219

Colorful Story

Stories are always better when they mention lots of bright colors. Write a story and fill it with as many colors as you can: plump red tomatoes, yellow taxi cabs, and green, green grass.

220

“We’re Not in Kentucky Anymore”

L. Frank Baum was born on May 15, 1856. He wrote *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. In this story, there are famous characters such as the Tin Man, who needs a heart, and the Lion, who needs courage. Here are three new characters: Cheetah wants to run fast. The Stone Statue wishes he could laugh. Dottie wishes to return home to Kentucky. First, read *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Then, write an Oz-style story and describe how these new characters' dreams come true.

221

Secretabub Codegop

Here's a secret code. On all words that end with a consonant, place “abub” at the end of the word. On all words that end with a vowel, place “gop” at the end of the word. Now, write a message in secret code and exchange it with a classmate. Goodabub luckabub crackingabub thegop codegop!

222

Abigail Supersleuth

Arthur Conan Doyle was born on May 22, 1859. He wrote many famous stories about a made-up detective named Sherlock Holmes. Write your own detective story using a character named either Arnold or Abigail Supersleuth. This will help you get started: “The mansion’s bedroom window was open. The diamonds and rubies and other jewels were missing . . .”

223

All-Four-One

Mia Hamm is a famous soccer player. Marie Curie is a famous scientist. Sally Fields is a famous actress. Sally Ride is a famous astronaut. Roll all four of them into one and you have Mia Marie Fields Ride, the world’s first soccer-playing, scientist, astronaut actress. Write a story about this wacky woman.

224

Birthday Song

How come the only song people hear on their birthday is “Happy Birthday”? Shouldn’t there be another birthday song called “It’s Your Big Day” or “Cake and Candles”? Think of some great new words and write a brand-new birthday song.

225

Wild, Wild West

Wild Bill Hickok was born on May 27, 1837. He’s a famous figure from the Wild West. Here are some new mean and ornery Western-style characters: Tough Terry McGillicutty, One-Eyed Pete, Bronco Betty, and her horse Thunder. Put these characters into a Western story.

