

WEEK OF
11.26.07

CURRENT EVENTS

Issue 11 Volume 107

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IN THIS ISSUE

OBJECTIVES

Main News: Students will learn about the damaging effects of recent oil spills off the coasts of California and Russia. Time Trip explores the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill off the coast of Alaska.

News Debate: Students will be able to conduct an informed debate about the meaning of privacy in the age of terrorism.

STANDARDS SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS)

Main News: Production, distribution, and consumption; People, places, and environments

News Debate: Science, technology, and society; Power, authority, and governance

LANGUAGE ARTS (NCTE)

Main News: Students read nonfiction texts to build a better understanding of the United States.

News Debate: Students apply a wide range of strategies to interpret and evaluate text.

GEOGRAPHY (NCGE)

Main News: How human actions modify the physical environment; Changes that occur in the importance of resources

SOCIAL STUDIES VOCABULARY

U.S. Coast Guard; Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

SKILLS BUILDERS

Page 3: Comprehension Skills

Page 4: Study Skills

Page 5: Crossword

MAIN NEWS

THE HIGH COST OF OIL

Get Talking

Ask students: What happens to oil when it spills into the ocean? How does an oil spill affect animals? How can those animals be saved?

Background

- Oil and water are *immiscible*, which means they do not mix. The reason is in their chemical makeup. For a detailed explanation of the oil-water interaction, see the Web site gold.cchem.berkeley.edu/research_twofaces.html. Oil floats on the surface of water in a slick because it is less dense than water.

- Since oil floats, cleanup crews have several ways to remove it from water. The Coast Guard typically uses booms—large inflated tubes—to corral an oil slick and keep it from spreading. Crews can then skim the oil from the surface, pump it out, or soak it up with absorbent materials. In some cases, oil can be burned off the water, but that is not an option in San Francisco Bay because of all the wildlife and human development surrounding it.



- You can get the latest numbers of birds saved, rescuers involved, and oil removed from San Francisco Bay on the Web site of the California Department of Fish and Game: www.dfg.ca.gov/ospr/spill. Click *Cosco Busan San Francisco Bay Spill*—November 2007.

Doing More

Conduct an experiment to show students how difficult cleaning up an oil spill can be. You'll need a small amount of motor oil, shallow bowls to hold water, and materials such as nylon, string, leaves, paper towels, and feathers. Pour a small amount of oil into the water. Have students dip each material into the oily water to see which collects the oil and how.

ISSUE DATES • 2007–2008

9/10	9/17	9/24	10/1	10/8	10/22	10/29	11/5	11/12	11/19	11/26	12/10	12/17	1/14	1/21
1/28	2/4	2/11	2/25	3/3	3/10	3/24	3/31	4/14	4/28					

SKIP ISSUE NOTICE

Your next issue of *Current Events* will be dated December 10, 2007.

Keep current at www.weeklyreader.com/ce. For updates on the stories in this issue, plus games and more, visit *Current Events* online.

Below are some key terms used in this issue of Current Events.

United States Coast Guard (USCG)

(page 4) Part of the U.S. armed forces, the USCG is charged with enforcement of maritime laws. The USCG was founded in 1790 by U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton as the Revenue Maritime Service. In 1915, it became the Coast Guard. In 2003, it was placed under the control of the Department of Homeland Security. The USCG is the smallest branch of the U.S. armed services. It has 39,000 members.

Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA)

(page 7) This 1978 law requires intelligence agencies such as the CIA, FBI, and National Security Agency (NSA) to obtain warrants from a special FISA court before intercepting communications. To get a warrant, an agency must demonstrate that at least one of the suspected parties is a foreign agent or terrorist. The Bush administration wants to loosen warrant requirements. The administration also wants immunity from lawsuits for companies that help the government perform warrant-less surveillance of U.S. citizens. Democrats oppose both proposals.

PRYING EYES

Get Talking

Ask students: What is privacy? How much should the government be able to know about you? How much privacy would you be willing to give up in order to prevent terrorism?

Notes Behind the News

- The concept of privacy has a long history in U.S. and British common law. In 1763, Sir William Pitt declared, “The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the rain may enter—but the King of England cannot enter; all his forces dare not cross the threshold of that ruined tenement.” For centuries, Pitt’s eloquent statement was seen as a standard description of privacy, the right to be left alone in your home, safe from the reaches of government.
- In the United States, the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution establishes the right of people to be safe in their homes. The notion of privacy as being safe from prying is

a fairly modern idea. The courts have upheld and applied it to a number of issues. The constitutionality of abortion, for example, was upheld in *Roe v. Wade* as connected to privacy—to a woman’s right to prevent an intrusion of her body.

- Although the right to privacy has been upheld in the United States, like all rights, it is not absolute. Courts often have given the government power over people’s privacy if public safety was involved. For example, students do not have an absolute right to privacy concerning the contents of their lockers if school officials suspect students may have drugs or weapons.

Doing More

George Orwell’s *1984*, published in 1949, imagines a future state in which people have absolutely no privacy. Thought Police even monitor people’s facial expressions. Have students discuss Orwell’s vision and whether it applies to today’s world.



ANSWER KEY

Student Edition

Analyze the Graph

1. A, 2. B, 3. A, 4. B

Word Power

1. meeting, 2. swallow,
3. most delicate,
4. impenetrable,
5. philosophy

Comprehension

1. C, 2. B, 3. C, 4. B

Teacher’s Guide

Page 3

Not So Slick: Analyze the Chart

1. B, 2. A, 3. C, 4. B, 5. C

Comprehension

1. A, 2. A, 3. A, 4. C, 5. C

Page 4: What’s the Point?

Main idea: (Cleaning Up) Wildlife experts and volunteers are working to clean up the oil and help the affected animals. **(Who’s to Blame?)** Officials are investigating the cause of the spill. **(Another Spill)** Another major oil spill recently occurred in the Black Sea. **Supporting details:** Answers will vary.

This week’s puzzle:



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SKILLS PAGE

11.26.07

Not So Slick

This chart shows the 10 worst oil spills worldwide involving ships over the past 40 years. Study the chart, and then fill in the circle next to the correct answer. Use a world map if you need to.

Rank	Ship name	Year	Location	Spill size in gallons
1.	<i>Atlantic Empress</i>	1979	near Tobago	88 million
2.	<i>ABT Summer</i>	1991	700 miles west of Angola	80 million
3.	<i>Castillo de Bellver</i>	1983	near South Africa	78 million
4.	<i>Amoco Cadiz</i>	1978	near France	69 million
5.	<i>Haven</i>	1991	near Italy	44 million
6.	<i>Odyssey</i>	1988	700 miles east of Canada	41 million
7.	<i>Torrey Canyon</i>	1967	near England	37 million
8.	<i>Sea Star</i>	1972	in the Gulf of Oman	35 million
9.	<i>Irenes Serenade</i>	1980	near Greece	31 million
10.	<i>Urquiola</i>	1976	near Spain	31 million

Source: The International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited

- Which continent has had the most large oil spills in its vicinity over the past 40 years?
 A Africa B Europe C Asia
- Which decade had the most major oil spills?
 A 1970s B 1980s C 1990s
- How many of the oil spills released more oil than numbers nine and 10 combined?
 A two B three C four
- Which country did not have one of the 10 worst oil spills near its coast?
 A France B Chile C Greece
- Which of the following statements is true?
 A The two worst spills released more oil than all the others combined.
 B The *Haven* crashed near Canada.
 C The *Sea Star* spilled 35 million gallons of oil.

Comprehension

Read this issue's cover story, "The High Cost of Oil," and then answer the following questions.

- How does being coated in oil affect seabirds?
 A. They can't maintain their body temperature.
 B. They slide when they try to land on water.
 C. Oil only affects seabirds if they ingest it.
- Which of the following are sometimes used to clean animals found coated in oil?
 A. dishwashing liquid and toothbrushes
 B. paint thinner and paintbrushes
 C. sandpaper and pesticides
- Why was fisherman David Kemp using his boat to help with the cleanup?
 A. The state halted all fishing in the bay for two weeks because of the oil spill.
 B. Kemp works for the Department of Health.
 C. Kemp didn't feel like fishing that day.
- Which statement is a fact?
 A. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is sympathetic to the *Cosco Busan's* owner and crew.
 B. Alaska recovered quickly after the *Exxon Valdez* spilled oil into Prince William Sound.
 C. A storm off the coast of Russia tore an oil tanker apart, spilling 600,000 gallons of oil.
- Investigators are looking into several possible reasons the *Cosco Busan* crashed into the Bay Bridge. Which of the following is not one of them?
 A. The ship's equipment might have failed.
 B. There might have been miscommunication between the ship's Chinese crew and the English-speaking harbor staff.
 C. Someone might have tampered with the maps the *Cosco Busan's* crew was using.

STUDY SKILLS

11.26.07

What's the Point?

Taking notes is a way of organizing your thoughts while you read. As you read the article "The High Cost of Oil" on pages 4-5, use this sheet to take notes. After you read each section of the article, fill in the main idea in the appropriate box below. Then fill in supporting details that back up each of the main ideas. Finally, use the main ideas and supporting details to create a summary of the article. Write the summary in the box at the bottom of the page.

Section	Main Idea	Supporting Details
Cleaning Up		
Who's to Blame?		
Another Spill		
Summary		

CROSSWORD

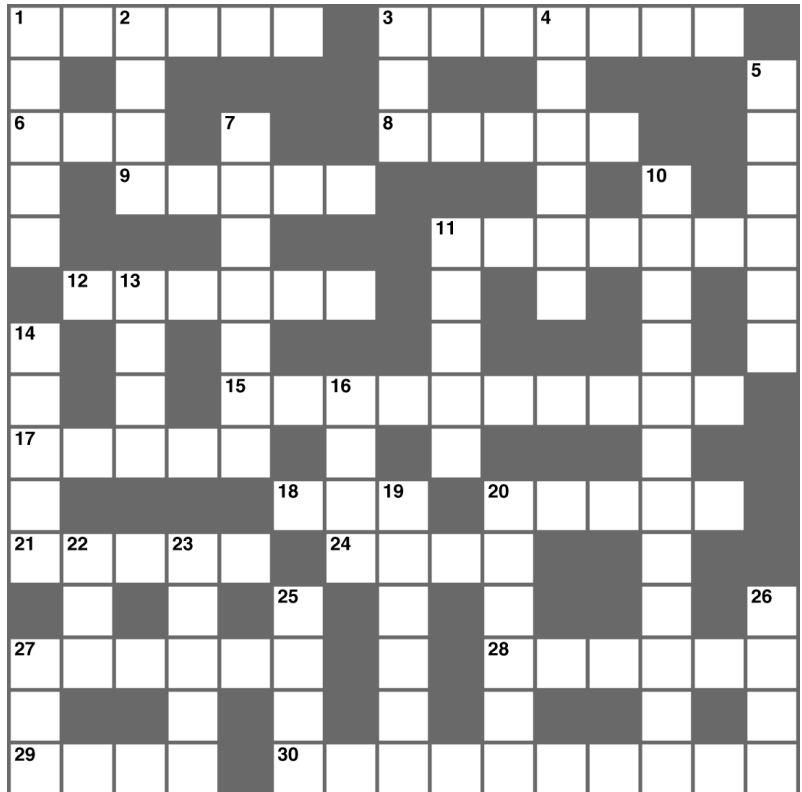
11.26.07

Across

1. half the diameter
3. big sib who is watching you
6. secret keeper's promise: _____'s the word
8. More than 12 million immigrants once passed through this island.
9. animals hit hard by recent oil spill
11. Countries of the United Kingdom include England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern _____.
12. Venezuela's sharp-tongued prez, Hugo _____
15. maritime military force that is helping clean up oil spill off U.S. coast (two words)
17. Mickey's pal
18. no's nemesis
20. big country with big wall and, soon, big wheel
21. potato's favorite seat
24. low-singing lady
27. largest U.S. state, off the coast of which there was a major oil spill in 1989
28. The Black Sea was the site of an oil spill off the coast of this country.
29. cave's call
30. Hogwarts headmaster (last name)

Down

1. Juliet's beau
2. _____ and dumber
3. animated movie getting lots of buzz, _____ *Movie*



4. what Sim Jae-duck's house looks like
5. tanker that crashed off the coast of 27 Across, *Exxon* _____
7. Some people say the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act invades people's _____.
10. oil spill site involving ship in 23 Down, _____ Bay (two words)
11. really, really mad
13. angel's headgear
14. If all humans are mortals, and all Greeks are humans, then all Greeks are mortals, for example.
16. If you know your triangles, you'll get this right; it equals $1/2$ (base x height).
19. gated community, on skis
20. cattle keeper
22. California's slimy beach blanket
23. ship that caused recent oil spill off the coast of California, _____ *Busan*
25. J.K. Rowling's new book, *The Tales of Beedle the* _____
26. New York City had a day against this.
27. prez who said, "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation ..." (first name, for short)