Lesson 15: Holiday

Answer the questions based on the conversation between co-workers Rhonda and Mac:

1. Mac is working on...
   a. reports
   b. presentations
   c. sales calls
2. Mac and Rhonda have a lot of work because...
   a. a big company event is coming up
   b. the supervisor gave them a lot to do
   c. they just got back from a holiday
3. How does Mac feel about Mr. Green?
   a. he's annoyed at him
   b. he feels sorry for him
   c. he respects him
4. After Rhonda leaves work, she's going to...
   a. the airport
   b. her relatives' house
   c. the supermarket
5. Mac and his wife usually spend Thanksgiving...
   a. at a restaurant
   b. cooking at home
   c. with Mac’s parents
6. Rhonda suggests...
   a. making a pumpkin pie for Mr. Green
   b. spending the holiday together
   c. taking a road trip
7. Mac doesn't want to...
   a. help prepare the turkey
   b. invite Mr. Green to Thanksgiving
   c. work late on the holiday
8. Does Rhonda change her mind based on what Mac says?
   a. Yes
   b. No
**Conversation Text**

**Mac:** Man, I can’t wait for this week to end and for Thanksgiving to begin. If I see one more report, I’m gonna pull my hair out.

**Rhonda:** This has really been the week from hell. Mr. Green sure piles on the work every time we prepare to take off for a holiday.

**Mac:** That’s because he’s a tightwad. It wouldn’t be the end of the world if he allowed his employees to have a few paid days off. That’s why he’s made this last week so tough – he wants to squeeze out the productivity before the holiday. I’m surprised he hasn’t chained us to our desks yet.

**Rhonda:** I know. But let’s not let him ruin our Thanksgiving. When I get out of this stuffy office I’m going straight to the grocery store and buying the biggest turkey I can find, along with the ingredients to make one of my homemade pumpkin pies.

**Mac:** Oh, now my mouth is watering. As much as I love my wife, she can’t cook to save her life. We usually spend our Thanksgiving meal at a restaurant. In fact, I can’t remember the last time I actually had some homemade pumpkin pie.

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**Vocabulary**

- I’m gonna pull my hair out = an exaggerated way to express that you can’t endure much more
- pile on the work = gives LOTS of work
- tightwad = someone who doesn’t like to spend money (negative connotation)
- it wouldn’t be the end of the world = it wouldn’t be a disaster
- squeeze out = get something by applying pressure
- chained = used metal chains to keep someone prisoner
- ruin = destroy, make bad
- stuffy = describes a place that lacks ventilation (negative connotation)
- my mouth is watering = that sounds delicious; I want to eat it!
- she can’t cook to save her life = she has ZERO cooking ability
Rhonda: Well, then, why don’t you load Megan and the kids into the car and come over to our house on Thanksgiving? We’d love to have you.

Mac: Oh, I don’t know. We wouldn’t want to intrude on your family’s holiday.

Rhonda: Who’s intruding? You guys are like family to us, Mac. Intruding? Good grief!

Mac: All right... okay... we’ll come.

Rhonda: Great! We’ll have a ball, you just wait and see. Roger will get the fireplace going. We’ll stuff ourselves full of turkey and pumpkin pie, savor some hot chocolate and sit by the fire.

Mac: Ahh, that sounds really nice. Way better than sitting in a plastic booth listening to some crabby waitress complaining about working on Thanksgiving. It sure puts a damper on my holiday spirit.

Rhonda: Well, keep in mind that we all have to make a living, and that waitress is probably just scraping by. It is sad that some people can’t be with their families on the holidays. I feel bad for those people.

Mac: Like Mr. Green – I don’t think he has any family in the area. He’ll probably spend the holiday right
here in the office **poring over** reports and **grumbling** that his accounting department is **incompetent**.

**Rhonda:** Maybe we should invite the **old fart** to Thanksgiving at my home?

**Mac:** Uh... you might wanna **think twice about that**, Rhonda. He’s so demanding, he’ll probably write up a report **critiquing** your pumpkin pie and file it with your performance review.

**Rhonda:** Don’t be so **uptight**, Mac. I’m sure even Mr. Green **loosens up** a bit during the holidays. Yeah... I **will** invite him, if he doesn’t have any other plans.

**Mac:** ::sighs:: **The more the merrier**, I suppose. Okay – I’m just gonna **wrap up** a few things, and then head home. See you tomorrow at 6?

**Rhonda:** You bet!
Vocabulary Quiz

Complete each sentence with a word from the box. Four words are not used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>crabby</th>
<th>loosen up</th>
<th>ruin</th>
<th>thinking twice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>incompetent</td>
<td>piling on</td>
<td>savoring</td>
<td>tightwad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intruding</td>
<td>poring over</td>
<td>scrape by</td>
<td>uptight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep in mind</td>
<td>put a damper on</td>
<td>stuffy</td>
<td>wrapping up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. All my professors have been ______________ assignments lately - I'll have to stay up all night to finish everything!
2. Can we open a window? It's getting ______________ in here.
3. Her parents' disapproval of the marriage ______________ her excitement about her upcoming wedding.
4. He's very unpleasant to work with because he gets ______________ when he doesn't get his way, and makes some nasty remarks.
5. I tried to put them out of my mind, but the worries kept ______________ on my thoughts.
6. It's so rare that I get to eat lobster. I'm ______________ every bite.
7. Maybe the problem was inevitable, but the way they handled it was completely ______________, and it just made things worse.
8. My husband's planning a round-the-world trip, so he's been ______________ airline websites and tourist guides lately.
9. She's such a ______________, she refused to contribute even $5 to the community fundraiser.
10. This lingerie is delicate so you need to wash it by hand. Putting it in the washing machine and dryer will ______________ it.
11. Well, he's single and has no kids, so he can ______________ on minimum wage.
12. We're almost done here - we'll be ______________ this meeting in about ten minutes.
Speaking Task

Mac doesn’t seem to get along very well with his supervisor. Talk about either a particularly good or particularly bad boss you've had. Also, do you prefer managing people, or being managed, and why?

Send your MP3 to help@espressoenglish.net for evaluation!

This is a free sample lesson from the Everyday English Speaking Course 2:
Answers

Comprehension Questions

1. a
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. a
6. b
7. b
8. b

Vocabulary Quiz

1. piling on
2. stuffy
3. put a damper on
4. crabby
5. intruding
6. savoring
7. incompetent
8. poring over
9. tightwad
10. ruin
11. scrape by
12. wrapping up