

CHAPTER 13

Modern Myths

Preview Questions



A myth is a popular story that sounds believable, but isn't true. Are these two statements myths or truths? Guess!

- **Fortune cookies were invented in China.**
- **Refried beans are fried twice.**

(Answers are on the last slide.)

Preview Questions

- **Do you know any myths? Tell one to your partner.**

Have you heard that **keeping** batteries in your refrigerator will make the batteries last longer? Or that **swallowing** gum is bad for you because the gum stays in your system for seven years?

Most everyone knows these myths, and many people enjoy **retelling** them. But what most people don't know is that these stories aren't true! In fact, **storing** batteries at room temperature is best. And **swallowing** gum doesn't seem **to hurt** the body. The body digests gum just like food.

How about this one? In New York City, baby alligators are flushed down toilets and learn how **to survive** in the sewer. Myth or fact? Myth! New York City officials say they've never found an alligator in the sewer. Alligators can't stand **living** in sewer conditions.

Clearly, it's not always easy **to tell** if a myth is true or not. **Checking** the popular website snopes.com is one way to uncover the truth. The site was created in 1995 by the Mikkelsons, a California couple who believe in **doing** "rumor research." Why is Snopes so popular? Apparently people like **learning** the truth even more than they like **hearing** a myth!

Reading Comprehension

True or False?

1. Many myths seem believable.

☒ T ☐ F

2. Swallowing gum isn't bad for you.

☒ T ☐ F

3. New York City has alligators in the sewer.

☐ T ☒ F

4. According to the Mikkelsons, rumors are more popular than the truth.

☐ T ☒ F

GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Choose the correct word. More than one answer may be correct.

To learn / Learning the truth behind a myth can be fun! Consider these myths: Many people believe that listing your e-mail address with the “National Do Not E-mail Registry” is a good idea. But that’s a myth; it doesn’t stop people from **to send / sending** you junk mail. Here’s another one: many parents want their children **to eat / eating** carrots because they believe it will keep them from **to need / needing** glasses. This is also false, but carrots are still good for you.

Answers to Preview Questions

Both are myths.

1) Fortune cookies were invented in California in the 1930s.

2) Refried beans are fried once. The problem comes from the translation of the Spanish word refritos, which means well-fried, not refried.

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