1. Spaghetti Trees

In 1957 there was a surprising news report on a British news program. It was about a village in Italy. People in the village were picking something from trees. It was spaghetti!

Spaghetti was growing on “spaghetti trees.” It was hanging from the branches of the trees. People picked it by hand and put it into baskets. Then they put the spaghetti on the ground to dry. After that, they enjoyed eating the spaghetti. Eight million people in Britain saw this TV program.

Of course you know that spaghetti doesn’t grow on trees. It’s made from flour, water, and eggs. The TV program was broadcast on April 1st. It was an April Fool’s Day joke. But many people believed it. At that time spaghetti was not common in the UK. So a lot of people didn’t know about spaghetti.

It was a funny “news” report, but people also learned an important lesson: you shouldn’t believe everything you see on TV.

2. Food in Japan

Now, Japan buys a lot of food from America, Australia, China, and many other countries. The vegetables from those countries are cheap all year around. But if the weather is bad, vegetables will not grow. Can we buy food from them then? Can we buy it at cheap prices? We must buy food at high prices. Do you understand the reasons?

Japan can make about 40% of the food that Japanese people need. We must buy 60% from other countries. It is not possible for us to make enough food. Look around you. Many fields, especially rice fields, have changed into houses or apartment buildings. Young people in Japan don’t want to be farmers. The air, ground, and rivers are polluted. These problems make food production very difficult. We must be aware of these problems. We must find a way to make much more food in our own country in the future.

3. Stinky Shoes

One day Mrs. Brown gave her husband some of her shoes. They were broken. She said, “Please take them to a shoemaker’s shop.” Mr. Brown did so. The shoemaker gave him a numbered ticket. He said, “Please bring this ticket when your shoes are ready.”

Four days later, Mr. Brown went to the shop. But, he couldn’t find the ticket! The shoemaker did not want to give him the shoes.

“How do I know which shoes are yours?” he said.

Mr. Brown thought carefully, and went back to his car. His wife’s small dog was sitting there waiting for him. He opened the door. They went back to the shop together. The dog began to smell around the shop, and soon it found Mrs. Brown’s shoes. The dog brought them quickly.

“That shows that they are my wife’s,” said Mr. Brown.

The shoemaker laughed. “It certainly does! That is better proof than the ticket,” he answered. He gave the shoes to Mr. Brown.

4. A Day With the Penguins

One day, a large truck broke down near a large city. A big empty bus stopped and the driver offered to help. The truck driver said, “I must take these penguins to the zoo. Please take them in your bus. I will give you two hundred dollars.” The bus driver said, “Yes.” He took the money and they put all the penguins into the bus.

The truck driver repaired his truck, then drove to the zoo. He saw the bus driver on the sidewalk with the hundred penguins. He was walking, and the penguins were walking, too, two-by-two in a line. The truck driver stopped immediately. He got out of his truck. He said to the bus driver, “I told you to take these penguins to the zoo!”

“I did,” said the driver. Some money was left over, so next I will take them to the movies.”