



Kate Hello and welcome to this week's 6 Minute English. Today I'm joined by Rebecca – hi Rebecca!

Rebecca Hello Kate

Kate Well tomorrow is the 25th December which is of course is Christmas Day! I love Christmas – how about you?

Rebecca answers

Kate Well, specific icon we all associate with Christmas is Santa Claus. What are your memories of him as a child?

Rebecca answers

Kate Before we go any further, here's my Christmas question for this week. Are you ready? An easy one this week.... whereabouts does Santa Claus live?

- Is it: a) the North Pole
b) Iceland
c) Norway

Rebecca answers

Kate: We'll check if you were correct at the end of the programme. Well apart from Santa who comes round to our houses to deliver presents to children, we can

often see him in the run up to Christmas in many department stores and shopping malls around the world. But I've been wondering about these people whose job it is to dress up as Santa for the Christmas period?

Rebecca: Yes, it is certainly an unusual job - must be fun though!

Kate: Well today we're going to hear from someone called Santa Paul who works as Santa in a department store in the US. We're going to hear from him as he's putting his Santa costume on and gets into character! Have a listen – what items of clothing does he mention?

Extract 1

Putting on my fabulous boots right now and they have gold buttons with the names of all the **reindeer** on them. Pick up my **sack** that I have made. The white gloves really finish the suit because the white **personifies** Santa as being pure and the red signifies Santa as being an **outdoorsman**. The hat - and there you have it, I am Santa Claus ready to join the world again. Ho Ho Ho!

Rebecca Well, first of all he put on his boots with gold buttons with the names of all the **reindeers** on them. Of course, reindeers are a type of animal with large horns, which are supposed to pull Santa's sleigh. Then he mentioned his **sack**, a type of bag in which he carries all the presents. Then he put on his gloves and hat and I think that was it. He is Santa!

Kate: Yes indeed. And did you manage to hear what the colours red and white signify?

Rebecca: The white **personifies** the purity of Santa. **Personifies** means that something is a perfect example of something so in this case the white gloves show how pure and good he is. And he said that red **signifies** or is a sign of him being an **outdoorsman** – someone who lives and works outside in the fresh air. He's certainly that!

Kate: Ah, so now we know. I've always wondered why he dressed in red and white... But how did Paul start being Santa in the first place? You're going to hear some new words next – could you explain what **bleached** mean?

Rebecca Well, **bleached** means to remove the colour from something usually using chemicals. So if you bleach your hair, you make it very blonde or white.

Kate And **persona**?

Rebecca Persona means the particular type of character that a person seems to have

Kate Thanks, so let's listen. How did Paul come to be Santa?

Extract 2

My friend Cliff, he had been a Santa for several years and he mentioned that he thought it was time that I be a Santa. So I had my hair **bleached** and once I saw that colour I knew I was Santa. I feel the **persona** coming out and once I'm in my full suit - I am Santa.

Rebecca: Well, he said his friend, Cliff had been Santa for a few years and he suggested to Paul that he do it too. So he **bleached** his hair and as soon as he did this, he felt Santa's **persona**.

Kate Yes, exactly. And at least he's convincing to all the children who come and visit him. So finally we're going to hear about where he works inside the department store, where he sits to greet all the children and give them presents. You're going to hear the word **reindeer** again. Let's listen – can you tell me three things about his house.

Extract 3

I have a small house, almost full sized reindeer, stuffed **reindeer** – I have a couple of them. And a **sleigh** and the set is actually raised just a little bit so it does look very **rustic**...

Rebecca So he said he has a small house in which he has two stuffed reindeer - so they're not real ones but toy ones and he also has his **sleigh** there and he said the overall impression is very **rustic** which means simple or typical of the countryside.

Kate Sounds very cosy! Well we're nearly out of time unfortunately. So let's go over some of the vocabulary we've come across today. We had: **reindeer, sack, personifies, outdoorsman, bleached, persona, sleigh** and **rustic**.

Kate And the question I asked you earlier. Where do you think Santa Claus lives?

Rebecca And I said the North Pole.

Kate Correct! Well that's all we have time for at the moment. We're off home now to hang up our stockings and wait for Santa to deliver our presents.
So from all of us at BBC Learning English, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas. Bye for now!