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КУЛЬТУРНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ АНГЛОГОВОРЯЩИХ СТРАН

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Учебное пособие

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В пособии представлены учебные материалы по теме «Культурное наследие англоговорящих стран», которая входит в раздел «Социально-культурная сфера общения (Я и мир. Я и моя страна)» по программе дисциплины «Иностранный язык» для будущих учителей неязыковых профилей и психологов, а также студентов профиля «Информационные системы и технологии» ступени бакалавриата. Контент пособия ориентирован на формирование системного взгляда студентов на культуру Великобритании и США, которая является частью мировой культуры. Тексты и задания сопровождаются иллюстративным материалом для лучшего понимания феномена.

Для студентов и преподавателей педагогических вузов.

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ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Современные требования к уровню профессиональной подготовки выпускников первой ступени высшего педагогического образования предполагают широкий культурный контекст. В связи с этим дисциплина «Иностранный язык» включает контент, связанный с формированием компетентности для эффективной иноязычной коммуникации в сферах повседневного и профессионального общения на межличностном и межкультурном уровнях. Совершенно очевидно, что межкультурный уровень имеет свою специфику, обусловленную необходимостью наличия широкого пласта знаний о культуре стран изучаемого языка.

Предлагаемое пособие состоит из двух разделов, где системно представлены темы, относящиеся к культурному наследию Великобритании и США. Информационная составляющая включает в себя тексты, касающиеся достопримечательностей, литературы, изобразительного искусства, театра, кино, музыки, праздников и традиций.

Весь информационный материал в пособии находит подтверждение в визуальном воплощении в виде иллюстраций и слайдов, что вполне логично для изучения контента, связанного с культурой. Задания, предлагаемые в пособии, носят практико-ориентированный характер, разнообразны по содержанию и ориентированы на формирование синтеза репродуктивных и продуктивных умений. Эту задачу решает наличие в пособии проверочных тестов и проектных заданий. В Приложении представлен материал, который поможет изучить предлагаемые темы на более углубленном уровне.

Авторы исходят из идеи, согласно которой культурное наследие Великобритании и США является частью мировой культуры и представляет собой уникальный феномен, изучение которого обогатит личность будущего учителя отечественного образования.

Выражаем надежду, что предлагаемое пособие поможет будущим учителям освоить курс иностранного (английского) языка и сформировать компетенции, необходимые для эффективной работы в области образования.

GREAT BRITAIN THE GENERAL VIEW OF BRITISH CULTURE

What comes to mind when you think of British culture? May be quite different traditional stereotypes. On the one hand, we might think of James Bond ordering Martini or of stylish people attending Wimbledon. On the other hand, we might think of Shakespeare's heritage or eccentric Mr. Bean. The UK is a multi-nation, multi-ethnic land of diversity and contrast. And yet we'll find it hard to meet a Brit who doesn't love a good cup of tea especially at 5 o'clock.

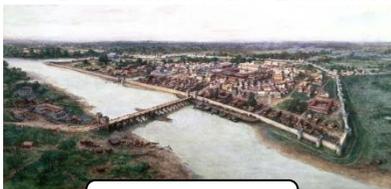
But as we speak of British culture we can't but have a general comprehension of such phenomena of culture as sights, museums, literature, painting, theatre, cinema, music, holidays and traditions. This chapter is about the culture of Britain.

LONDON: THE SIGHTS

London is where the invading Romans first crossed the River Thames. They built a city a square mile in size, surrounded with a wall and called it **Londinium**. This original site of London is now called **the City of London** and is Britain's main financial centre.

The City is only a very small part of London. In the eleventh century London began to expanse beyond the City walls when King Edward the Confessor built a huge abbey at Westminster. Even today, **Westminster Abbey** and **the Houses of Parliament**, as well as all the shops, cafés, theatres and cinemas of the West End are in the City of Westminster and not in the City of London. **Tower Bridge** is the symbol of **London**. Every excursion to London starts from Tower Bridge.

Let's make a tour of London. We'll start long in history from Londinium.



Londinium



Tower Bridge



Westminster Abbey



Houses of Parliament



The City

Some more history



The Great Fire of London in 1666

After The Great Fire of London **Saint Paul's Cathedral** was built. Cathedral is the tall building with the dome. The cathedral was designed by the famous architect Sir Christopher Wren to replace the church which had been destroyed in The Great Fire of London in 1666.



Saint Paul's Cathedral

Now we are in the centre of London. It has many different areas. Each one has its own special character. **The Buckingham Palace** is the place where Queen and her family live. **Covent Garden in London's West End** is crowded with cafés, clubs and clothes shops. **Soho** is also known for its clubs. **Piccadilly Circus** has a specific architecture and there are a lot of exclusive and expensive shops here. **Fleet Street** is the home of the Law Courts. One part of the West End has so many Chinese shops and restaurants that it is called **Chinatown**.

Now let's go further over London.



The Buckingham Palace



Covent Garden



Soho



Piccadilly Circus



Fleet Street



Chinatown



Hampstead

When you go outside the centre you find many areas which used to be small villages. The villages became the part of the city when the city expanded but they still managed to keep their village character. **Hampstead**, the best-known of the villages, is extremely expensive. It is on one of the highest hills in London.

Additional.

You may read more about London sights and ceremonies at pp 80, 112.

Tasks:

1. Make a tourist map of London.
2. Write an essay on the topic "You are only one day in London. What place would you like to visit to and why?"

MUSEUMS

There are so many museums and galleries in London that even people who have lived there for a long time don't know them all. Some are

traditional museums, but many are now making their exhibitions interactive or hands-on to encourage people to touch and understand what is on display. At **the Science Museum** visitors can carry out experiments. At the **Natural History Museum** visitors can find out how to look for fossils on the beach. At **the National Gallery** the country's main art gallery, visitors can call up paintings on computer screens, find out about them and then print out a plan with their location indicated.



The Science Museum



The Natural History Museum



The National Gallery



In one of the halls of the National Gallery

Task:

1. Imagine you are a guide at the National Gallery. Find the information about any picture you liked in the Internet and get ready to speak on it to your groupmates.
2. Find the information in the Internet about other London museums (Tate Gallery etc.) and make up a project on in. You may use the Recommendations how to do projects at p. 109.

BRITISH LITERATURE

William Shakespeare



Britain's greatest playwright was born at Stratford-on-Avon in England in 1564. Stratford is now the second most-visited town in Britain. People come to see his plays performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the theatre which is named after him and to see his tomb.

In the early 1590s Shakespeare went to London. He set up his own theatre, **the Globe**, where his Company performed his plays. During Shakespeare's lifetime, most of his plays were performed at the Globe

Theatre, a wooden theatre in London. An exact reconstruction of the Globe is being built and visitors can now experience what it was like to go to the theatre 400 years ago.



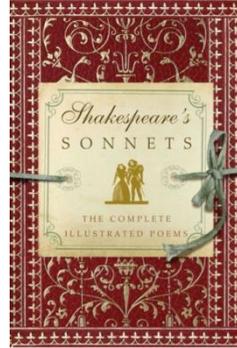
The Globe Theatre at Shakespeare's times... ... and now.



Shakespeare's characters

Shakespeare's Sonnets

Published in 1609, the *Sonnets* were the last of Shakespeare's non-dramatic works to be printed. We are not certain when each of the 154 sonnets was composed, but evidence suggests that Shakespeare wrote sonnets throughout his career. Even before the two unauthorised sonnets appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599, Francis Meres had referred in 1598 to Shakespeare's "sugred Sonnets among his private friends". He seems to have planned two contrasting series: one about uncontrollable love for a married woman of dark complexion (the "dark lady"), and one about conflicted love for a fair young man (the "fair youth"). It remains unclear if these figures represent real people, or if the authorial "I" who addresses them represents Shakespeare himself, though some people believed that with the sonnets "Shakespeare unlocked his heart".



The 1609 edition was dedicated to a "Mr. W.H.", credited as "the only begetter" of the poems. It is not known whether this was written by Shakespeare himself or by the publisher, Thomas Thorpe, whose initials appear at the foot of the dedication page, we don't know who Mr. W.H. was, despite numerous theories or whether Shakespeare even authorised the publication. Critics praise the *Sonnets* as a profound meditation on the nature of love, passion, procreation, death, and time.

Sonnet 130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;



My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

Ее глаза на звезды не похожи,
Нельзя уста кораллами назвать,
Не белоснежна плеч открытых кожа,
И черной проволокой вьется прядь.
С дамасской розой, алой или белой,
Нельзя сравнить оттенок этих щек.
А тело пахнет так, как пахнет тело,
Не как фиалки нежный лепесток.
Ты не найдешь в ней совершенных линий,
Особенного света на челе.
Не знаю я, как шествуют богини,
Но милая ступает по земле.
И все ж она уступит тем едва ли,
Кого в сравненьях пышных оболгали!



Перевод С.Я. Маршака

Additional.

You may read more about Shakespeare at p. 83.

Task:

1. *Translate some familiar quotations from Shakespeare.*

"We know what we are but we know not what we may be"

Hamlet

"There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so"

Hamlet

"What's done can't be undone"

Macbeth

"It is a wise father that knows his own child"

The Merchant of Venice

**"What is a name? That which we call a rose by any other name
would smell as sweet? "**

Romeo and Juliet

Charles Dickens

Dickens was the most popular novelist in the English language in the nineteenth century. When he was only 12, Charles had to leave school and work in a factory. His novels often tell the stories of young children who work hard to escape a life of poverty. Many of the stories were set in London.



Most of his books first appeared as serials in magazines. Each week or month Dickens had to write another chapter of his story. He had to write fast and sometimes changed the stories if the public did not like his last chapter or particularly liked certain characters. Many of his stories had happy end.



“Oliver Twist” is the story of an orphan thrown out of the poor house because he asks more food. The story was filmed many times. There is even the musical “Oliver Twist” with nice music.

Task:

1. *Make a list of four of your country’s most famous novelists. Did they write about country or the city? Imaginary towns or real ones? Rich people or poor?*

Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte

The Bronte sisters were exceptional writers of poetry as well as fiction. Between 1847 and 1848 all three sisters published novels. They all wrote under different names because "good" women were not allowed to write: Emily Brontë became Ellis Bell; Charlotte Brontë, Currer Bell; Anne Brontë, Acton Bell. "Wuthering Hights" by Emily Brontë is one of the well-known novels. The story tells about the destructive and passionate love between two children, Catherine and Heathcliff, who grow up on a farm called Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff leaves the farm when Catherine for reasons of class refuses to marry him.

All three sisters died very young. The house where they lived is now a museum and we can walk it over the Yorkshire moors to the farm where Wuthering Heights is set.



Catherine and Heathcliff both loved each other and hated each other. This idea attracts readers much.

NOWADAYS BRITISH LITERATURE

A number of writers from the former British colonies live now in Britain, work there and write about their present life in colonies. For example, Paul Scott's novels show the last years of the British presence in India.

English literature has benefited from the work of Indian, African and Asian authors who write in English and who write novels from the point of view of the colonised rather than the colonisers. Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian author wrote "Things Fall Apart". The story tells how an important man in

the Obi tribe is forced by his own people to leave his village when he fights the arrival of white English missionaries.

Some writers are changing the way English is written. They write English to show the way that they speak the language. They try to show rhythm and local accent in their work. This started in the 1960s with a group of poets from the city of Liverpool. Their poems are best understood when they are read aloud. Very often it is a kind of “rap” style. Bookshops now arrange performances of modern poets’ work and this has helped to make their poetry more popular.

Task:

1. Язык – часть культуры. На английском языке говорят во многих странах мира, и часто происходит «смешение» языков.

Изучите слайды и исправьте «ошибки» в стихотворении Бенджамина Зефания «**This Poetry**» на слайде № 4.

Примеры Englishes

- **Benglish (Bengali English),**
- **Chinglish (Chinese English),**
- **Czenglish (Czech English),**
- **Danglish (Danish English),**
- **Dunglish (Dutch English),**
- **Finglish (Finnish English),**
- **Franglais (French English) и многие другие.**

Slide 1

А в это время в самой Британии и особенно в Лондоне...

- ...все большее распространение получает так называемый **мультикультурный лондонский английский**. Новый диалект, называемый на сленге «Jafaican» - «**яфайский**» - это гибрид различных языков, наречий и акцентов (в основном, ямайский, африканский языки и хинди, а также имеет некоторые черты **кокни**), родившийся в результате массовой иммиграции и изменения демографической обстановки в Ист-Энде – некогда сердца акцента «кокни»



Slide 2

- **Бенджамин Зефания** – известный британский поэт и растафари-музыкант с ямайскими и барбадосскими корнями, родился и вырос в Бирмингеме, район Хандсворд. На его творчество оказала большое влияние ямайская поэзия.



Slide 3

Переведем с английского на английский

- **Dispoetry**
- Dis poetry is like a riddimdat drops
De tongue fires a riddimdat shoots like shots
Dis poetry is designed ferantin
Dance hall style, big mouth chanting,
Dis poetry nar put yu to sleep
Preaching follow me
Like yu is blind sheep,
Dis poetry is not Party Political
Not designed fe dose who are critical.

Slide 4

BRITISH PAINTING

The history of British painting is linked with the broader traditions of European painting. Kings and queens commissioned portraits from German, Dutch, and Flemish artists.

During the 18th and 19th centuries young members of the British upper classes broadened their education with the Grand Tour of continental Europe. They encountered a sophisticated level of artistic achievement that influenced their tastes as art patrons. To ensure similarly high standards in Britain the Royal Academy was founded in London in 1769. Its first president was **Sir Joshua Reynolds**, a brilliant painter of lively and elegant portraits as well as an influential lecturer.

Among brilliant British painters the name of **William Hogarth** should be mentioned. His work ranges from realistic portraiture to comic strip-like series of pictures called "modern moral subjects". Knowledge of his work is so pervasive that satirical political illustrations in this style are often referred to as "Hogarthian".

The late 18th century saw a growing interest in landscape painting. Some artists painted idealized scenes imbued with the spirit of the classical past while others pursued more individual and personal visions of the natural world. **Thomas Gainsborough**, although best known for his fashionable portraits, painted highly imaginative landscapes and seascapes that transcend specific time and place.

The great flowering of English landscape paintings came during the first half of the 19th century especially in the work of two masters, **John Constable** and **J.M.W. Turner**. Constable's true-to-life views of the verdant English countryside emphasized the essential harmony and purity of nature. Turner, on the other hand, was a romantic who expressively dissolved forms in terms of light and atmosphere. With their fresh vision and powerfully original styles, Constable and Turner profoundly influenced the work not only of many subsequent British painters but of countless other American and European artists as well.

This is a kind of the “hall” of best British painters



Portrait of George Townshend Lord Ferrers

Joshua Reynolds



Marriage A-la-mode

William Hogarth

**Thomas
Gainsborough**

*A portrait of James
Hamilton*





Cathedral in Salisbury

John Constable

Alnwick Castle



J.M.W. Turner

BRITISH THEATRE

Britain has a long tradition of drama. British theatre began in the thirteenth century before the time of Shakespeare with a series of short stories from the Bible called The Mystery Plays. Even today every four years in York and Chester ordinary people still perform these plays.

Acting, both by amateurs and professionals, is still very much alive in Britain. British professional actors are usually highly respected and well-trained.

The most famous British theatres are the **Royal National Theatre** and **the Barbican**. The Royal Shakespeare Company performs at the Barbican in London and in Stratford-on-Avon where Shakespeare was born. These theatres receive money from the government so that they can perform several different plays during a year. In spite of the money from the government many theatres including the Royal National Theatre and the Barbican find it difficult to survive.

There are many smaller theatre groups in Britain. Some of them receive money from the government to perform plays which are contemporary and experimental.



The Royal National Theatre



Anything goes at the Barbican Theatre

Most British cities have theatres but London has the greatest number. There are over 50 theatres in London's West End and the area in London with most theatres and more than 35 smaller fringe theatres.

In recent years musicals have been very successful. About 5 million people, many of them tourists, go to see a musical every year in London.

Going to the theatre in Britain is not only popular but also expensive. Not many young people can afford to go there. It is possible to get cheaper tickets by going to afternoon performances called matinees or by buying stand-bys, half-price tickets which are sold half an hour before a performance starts.



The best-known contemporary composer of musicals is Andrew Lloyd Webber. At the moment there four of his productions in London. "Cats" is the longest-running musical.

CINEMA IN BRITAIN

Going to the cinema is rather popular in Britain especially with young people. But let's compare: in 1992 over 90 per cent of 15 to 24-year-olds in Britain went to the cinema, in 1984 this figure was only 59 per cent. After that in 1984 many multiplexes and cinema Complexes with up to 14 screens showing a wide range of modern films have been built. These multiplexes have encouraged more people to go to the cinema.

British men and women have different tastes in films. Most men like action films which they watched on television or on video. Women prefer films which deal with human relations between friends or between men and women.

Hollywood dominates the cinema in Britain. British film industry does exist, but only 2.5 per cent of all the money taken at cinema box offices was for British films.

British films do not have big budgets and cannot compete with American films. The few films made by British film companies usually receive money from American companies. This means that British films often have to use American actors to appeal to the American cinema-going audience. British people who want to make films often go to America. Hollywood is full of British actors, directors, writers, editors and camera people.



Cinema is very often on the ground floor of the house



Four Weddings and a Funeral is the most popular British film ever made.

Task:

1. Find any British film in the Internet and write an essay on the following plan:

- the title;
- the director;
- the actors;
- what you liked in the film;
- what you didn't like in the film;
- your understanding of the language of the film;
- your feelings after seeing the film.

BRITISH MUSIC

The British music scene is extremely varied. There are many different types of music and groups that you can enjoy. If you want to you can go to a techno night at the local club on Friday, a classical concert on Saturday and see a reggae band live on stage on Sunday.

It is difficult for groups in Britain to have lots of fans or sell lots of records because there are so many different types of music. There are even more types than are listed in the task. Bands do not last long and very few groups stay in the Top 20, a list of the best-selling records for more than one or two weeks. Even if they are in the Top 20 it does not necessarily mean that they sell many records.

Pop music in Britain is influenced by music from all over the world. Many young people like reggae which came from Jamaica. Boys also enjoy dancing and listening to Black-American rap.

Some music in Britain is a mixture of styles. Ragga brings together rap and reggae, for example. Pop music is also influenced by traditional music. Recently some young musicians of Asian origin have started to mix bhangra (traditional music from the Punjab region) with Western pop.

Task:

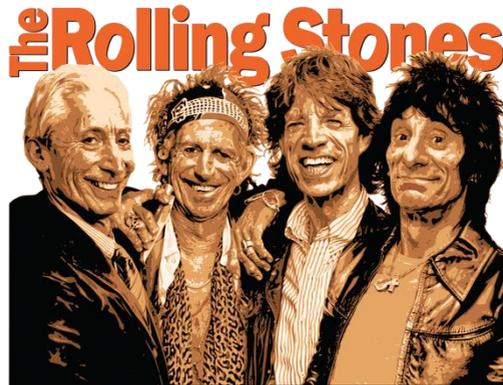
1. 60 British teenagers were asked about their favourite type of music?" Some of their answers are on the list below.

Which types of music do you like?

A chart	F indie	K rap	P Trance
B hardcore	G jungle	L rave	
C heavy metal	H mellow	M raggae	
D hip-hop	I pop	N soul	
E house	J ragga	O techno	



The Queen *"The Show must go on"*



The Rolling stones *is a very popular group in Britain even now*

Task:

1. Find any song by British and Russian rock singers and compare the content.

British are fond of Art Festivals. You may read about it at p.119.

The Beatles



The Beatles were an English rock band, formed in Liverpool in 1960, that comprised *John Lennon*, *Paul McCartney*, *George Harrison* and *Ringo Starr*.

They are regarded as the most influential band of all time. Their sound incorporated elements of classical music and traditional pop in innovative ways. The band later explored music styles ranging from ballads and Indian music to psychedelia and hard rock.

By early 1964 the Beatles were international stars and had achieved unprecedented levels of critical and commercial success. They became a leading force in Britain's cultural resurgence. From 1965 onwards they produced records of greater sophistication, including the albums *Rubber Soul* (1965), *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) and enjoyed further commercial success with *The Beatles*.

The Beatles are the best-selling music act of all time with estimated sales of 600 million units worldwide. They hold the record for most number-one albums on the UK Albums Chart (15), most number-one hits on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart (20), and most singles sold in the UK (21.9 million). The band received many accolades, including seven Grammy Awards, four Brit Awards, an Academy Award (for Best Original Song Score for the 1970 documentary film *Let It Be*).



"We all live in a Yellow Submarine" is one of the most popular songs by Beatles

Task: Choose any of Beatles songs and write 6 sentences about the history of the song.

THE BRITISH YEAR

There are eight public holidays a year in Great Britain, that are days on which people need not go to work. They are: **Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday and Late Summer Bank Holiday**. In Scotland, as opposed to England and Wales, **January 2nd** is also a public holiday. Most of these holidays are of religious origin though it would be true to say that for the greater part of the population they have long lost their religious significance and are simply days on which people relax, eat, drink and make merry. All the public holidays except Christmas Day and Boxing Day observed on December 25th and 26th respectively, and New Year's Day are movable, that is they do not fall on the same date each year.

January

New Year's Eve

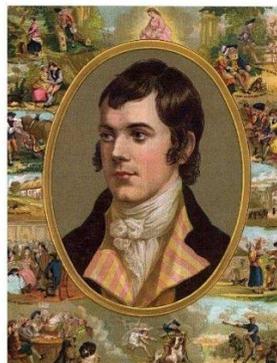
All over Britain on 31 December there are New Year celebrations. Most people see in the New Year with friends. At midnight on New Year's Eve, everybody joins hands and sings **Auld Lang Syne**, a poem by the Scottish poet Robert Burns. In Scotland and the North of England people go first footing. They call at friends' houses trying to be the first person through the door after midnight. To symbolize good luck the visitor carries a piece of coal and a glass of water.



Auld Lang Syne

by R. Burns

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And days of auld lang syne?
For auld lang syne, my dear
For auld lang syne
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For days of auld lang syne.



Забуть ли старую любовь
и не грустить о ней?
Забуть ли старую любовь
и дружбу прежних дней?
За дружбу старую -
до дна!
За счастье прежних дней!
С тобой мы выпьем, старина,
за счастье прежних дней.



Перевод С.Я. Маршака

New Year's Day

On New Year's Day (1 January) people make New Year's resolutions. They decide to do something to improve their lives. For example, people decide to give up smoking or go to the gym once a week.



February

Crufts Dog Show

Dog lovers all over the world bring their valuable dogs to take part in Crufts Dog Show in London. There are prizes for most breeds and one for the best dog who is given the title Crufts Supreme Champion.



Saint Valentine's Day

Saint Valentine's Day is 14 February. People send a Valentine's card to someone they love, fancy, admire or secretly like. Usually you don't sign your name. The person who receives the card has to guess who sent it.



March

The Boat Race

This rowing race between the Cambridge and Oxford teams has been held on the River Thames in London almost every year since 1836. The length of the course is 4½ miles (7.2 kilometres).



Pancake Day

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent starts. Lent is a Christian fast which lasts for 40 days before Easter. Pancake Day is traditionally a day of celebration, the last day you can eat what you want until Easter. Pancakes are made of flour, eggs and milk: all things should not be eaten during Lent.



April

April Fool's Day

You can play jokes on people, even on teachers. When they discover the joke you say, "April Fool!" You have to play the joke to say "April Fool!". You have to play the joke on you.



Easter

Schools close for two weeks at Easter. On Good Friday people eat hot cross buns which are small sweet rolls. They eat them toasted with butter. People give each other chocolate Easter eggs on Easter Sunday. The eggs are usually hollow and contain sweets.



The London Marathon

This is one of the biggest marathons in the world. Each year about 30 000 people start the race and about 25 000 finish. Some people take part to raise money for charity, often wearing costumes. There are also a race for people in wheelchairs.



May

May Day

In villages throughout Britain on 1 May you can see children dancing round the maypole and singing songs. It is a pagan festival to celebrate the end of winter and welcome summer.



FA (Football Association) Cup Final

This is the biggest day in the football calendar. Two English football clubs play to win the FA Cup. The match takes place at Wembley Stadium in London. Scotland has its own FA Cup Final, played at Hampden Park in Glasgow.



Chelsea Flower Show

This is Britain's most important flower and garden show. Thousands of people come to see the prize flowers and specially built gardens.



June

Royal Ascot

This is one of the biggest horse-race meetings in Britain. It is held at Ascot in the south of England. The Queen drives there from Windsor Castle. Ascot lasts for four days.



Trooping the Colour

This is the second Saturday in June and celebrates the Queen's official birthday (her real birthday is 21 April). She watches a parade of hundreds of soldiers. There is lots of marching, military music and the soldiers are dressed in colorful uniforms.



July

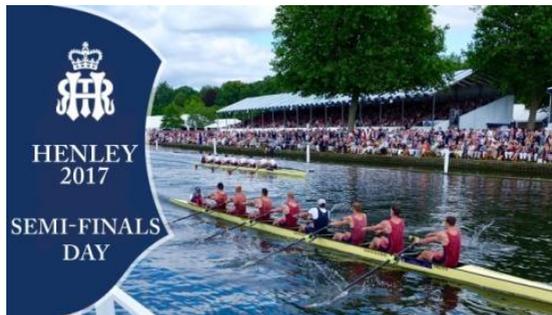
Wimbledon

This is one of the four great tennis championships and the only one which is played on grass. It is held in the last week of June and the first week of July in south-west London.



Henley Regatta

This is the largest rowing championships in Britain. It is held at Henley-on-Thames where the Thames runs in a straight line over two kilometers and makes it an ideal place for rowing. The regatta or boat racing competition has been held there almost every year since 1839.



August

Notting Hill Carnival

The last weekend in August there is a big carnival at Notting Hill in west London. People who take part dress up in fabulous costumes. Steel bands play African and Caribbean dance music and people dance and blow whistles. It's the biggest carnival outside Brazil.



The Proms

This is a popular series of classical music concerts. The season lasts seven weeks and there are concerts every night. Most of the concerts are performed at the Royal Albert Hall in London. A lot of people like to go to the Last Night of the Proms. The orchestra plays popular tunes. People sing along and wave flags.



September

Blackpool Illuminations

Every year 16 million visitors go to the holiday resort of Blackpool. When summer ends there are still things to see. From 1 September to 1 November the promenade has a special illuminated display at night. The theme of the display changes every year. Blackpool Illuminations along seven miles of promenades is the most visited attraction in Britain.



Harvest Festivals

In the autumn harvest festivals are held. This is a Christian festival and churches are decorated with fruit, vegetables and flowers that people bring. Traditionally the festival was held to say thank you to God for a good harvest.



October

International Motor Show

Every second year car manufacturers from all over the world display their latest models at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham.



Halloween

31 October is Halloween. This pagan festival celebrates the return of the souls of the dead who come back the places where they used to live. In the evenings there are a lot of Halloween's parties or fancy dress parties. People dress up as witches, ghosts, devils, cats, bats or anything scary. Houses are decorated with pumpkins with candles put inside. Some children follow American custom called Trick or Treat. They knock at the house and ask "Trick or Treat?" If you give them some money or sweets (a treat) they run away. Otherwise they play trick on you like squirring water in your face.



November

London to Brighton Veteran Car Rally

This is usually the first Sunday in November. Hundreds of veteran cars are driven from London to Brighton on the south coast of England.



Guy Fawkes' Night (Bonfire Night)

Guy Fawkes was Britain's most famous terrorist. On November 1605 Guy Fawkes planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament and the King of England James I. The plot was discovered and Guy Fawkes was hanged. Every year on 5 November people celebrate by setting off fireworks. They also make models of Guy Fawkes and burn them on big bonfires.



December

Pantomimes

These are plays put on before Christmas, usually for children. They are based on fairy tales, such as Cinderella or Aladdin, and mix comedy, song and dance. Most people send Christmas cards to their friends and relations. Some shops sell charity cards and the profits made from selling these cards go to good causes. The most important day of the holiday is 25 December, or Christmas Day. Children wake up early to find a stocking full of small presents on their bed. Other presents, opened when everyone is together are arranged around the Christmas tree which is usually decorated with multicolored lights. Traditional Christmas dinner includes roast turkey, roast potatoes and brussel sprouts, followed by Christmas pudding.



Christmas

In the UK families often celebrate Christmas together so they can watch each other open their presents. Most families have a Christmas Tree (or may be even two!) in their houses for Christmas. The decorating of the tree is usually a family occasion with everyone helping. Christmas Trees were first popularized by Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria. Prince Albert was German and he thought it would be very good to use one of his ways of celebrating Christmas in England.

Most villages, towns and cities are decorated with Christmas lights over Christmas. Often a famous person switches them on. The most famous Christmas lights in the UK are in Oxford Street in London. Every year they get bigger and better. Thousands of people go to watch the big "switch on" around the beginning of November.



Boxing Day

This is 26 December. It is usually spent in front of the TV recovering from Christmas Day.



Additional.

You may find some additional texts about holidays and traditions in Britain at p. 84.

Tasks:

1. What British holidays are the same as in Russian culture? What differ?
2. Choose any holiday in British culture and make a project. Use the rules how to make a project at p. 110.

Task on the topic “The British Culture”:

Look through the slides of the presentation “The Cultural Heritage of Great Britain” and do the tests on slides 3 and 13.

The Cultural Heritage of Great Britain

- We'll speak on theatre, painting, literature, music, traditions and sights



Slide 1

Theatre

- British theatre has remarkable history.
 - **Shakespeare, Shaw, Wilde: these names are well-known all over the world**
- Globe,*
- Hamlet* *Pigmalion*
- Romeo and Juliet*
- The Importance of Being Ernest*

Slide 2

Guess

Slide 3

Painting

- 18 century is the top of British painting.
 - The most famous painters are:

- **William Hogarth**
- *the master of*
- *dramatic*
- *composition*
- *and critical eye*
- *(Shrimp girl)*

Joshua Reynolds
a portraitist




(Self-Portrait)

Slide 4

Thomas Gainsborough
the purest lyricist



(The Morning Walk)

Slide 5

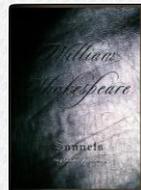
John Constable
*the greatest English
Landscape painter*



(Hay Wain)

Literature

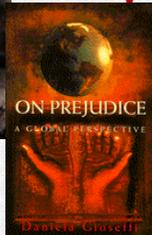
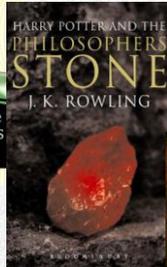
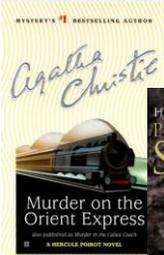
- **Classic**
- **William Shakespeare**
(tragedies, comedies, sonnets)
- **Charles Dickens**
(novel, social problems)
- **Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë**
(fiction, love stories)



Slide 6

Literature

- **Modern**



- **Agatha Christie**
- (detective stories)
- **Joanne Rowling**
 - (fantasy)
- **Multicultural English**
 - **Literature**
the writers who came
 - *from former*
 - *British colonies)*

Slide 7

Music

- **The Beatles**



- *Let it be...*
- *Yesterday...*
- *The Girl...*

Rolling Stones



Rock

Slide 8



Traditions

- **January:** *New Year*
- **February :** *St. Valentine's Day*
- **March:** *Pancake Day*
- **April:** *April's Fool Day, Easter*
- **May:** *Chelsea Flower Show*
- **June:** *Trooping the Colour*
- **July:** *Henley Regata*



Slide 9



Traditions



August: *Notting Hill Carnival*

September: *Harvest Festival*

- **October:** *Halloween*

- **November:** *Veteran Car Rally*

- **December:** *Christmas*



Slide 10

Sightseeing

- GB is a very old country. There are many historical sights everywhere.



The Tower

London

*The Tower
Bridge*



Big Ben

Slide 11

Sightseeing

Scotland



The castle

Wales



The ruins

Northern Ireland



The glen

- *The castle*
- *The ruins*
- **“Rule, Britannia, the waves,
Britans never will be slaves!”**
-

Slide 12

Test

- 1. **What is the capital of GB?**
 - a) London;
 - b) Glasgow;
 - c) Paris
- 2. **When British celebrate Halloween?**
 - a) in May;
 - b) in December;
 - c) in October
- 3) **What kind of book did Agatha Christie write?**
 - a) love stories;
 - b) detective;
 - c) fantasy
- 4) **What did John Constable paint?**
 - f) portraits;
 - b) landscapes;
 - c) marine

Slide 13

Check yourself

- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. b
- 4. b



Slide 14

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE GENERAL VIEW OF AMERICAN CULTURE

One stereotype of the United States is that of a culture where television, sports and other forms of popular entertainment overshadow the arts. In fact, Americans are deeply committed to the arts. Not only do more people today attend arts events than sports events but almost as many people go to art museums as to pop concerts.

To accommodate the publics' increasing demand for the arts many new cultural facilities are being built; the architectural trend towards expansive, imposing new designs for museums and theaters suggests the elevated status of the arts in America today.

The media, particularly television, have generated a broad base of interest and enthusiasm for the arts through regular promotion and coverage of cultural events. The reach of the arts extends in sizable numbers to people of all ages, almost all economic groups, and all regions of the country.

In the USA culture has minimal government support. The cultural explosion is remarkable when one considers the relative lack of government support of the arts. Promotion of the arts through private and commercial funding rather than government funding is a firmly established tradition in the United States. Recently however, the government's role in supporting the arts has increased. The National Endowment for the Arts, a government agency created in 1965, has been contributing to the advancement of the arts. In XXI c. the federal government was spending \$163 million a year on this endowment; the annual spending of state governments reached \$160 million. Still, all government arts spending remains small compared with private arts in the United States than in any other major Western nation.

As we speak about the USA as the country of immigrants it is important to mention mixture of styles in culture because people from different parts of the world brought and continue to bring the trends of their own culture to America. So American artists began to create their own art forms. The styles of American art are as diverse as the people. Just as there is no single ethnic group, there is also no single American style. American artists have been inspired by a variety of influences, including folk primitivism and European sophistication. Painters, sculptors, musicians, and innovators in other fields have won fame both at home and abroad.

Task

1. Make up the scheme of the specific features of culture in the USA. You may use the slides or any other devices.

Let's see what the cultural life of USA looks like.

THE SIGHTS

We start sightseeing in America from **Washington**. It is the capital of USA.

Capitol Hill is the highest place in the city. There is a law that forbids building houses higher than the Capitol on Capitol Hill. **The Lincoln Memorial** and **Washington Monument** are the most famous sights in Washington. Washington Monument is situated in Potomac Park and is one of the most impressive sights in the city. It was erected to the memory of the first president of the USA in 1888. It is called "the Pencil" because it is one of the tallest stone constructions in the USA.

The White House is the place where President of USA works.

New-York is the business, financial and cultural center of the country. We may say that the US began in the place where New York is situated now.

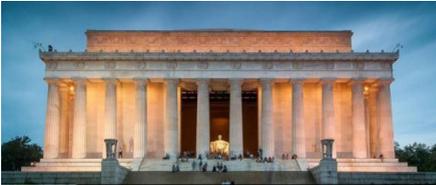
The history of New York began around 10,000 BC, by the French in 1524 and first claimed in 1609 by the Dutch (Hudson).

During the 19th century, New York City became the main entry point for European immigrants to the United States. Millions came through Ellis Island that was opened in 1892 to welcome millions more. **The Statue of Liberty** was a present of France, it was opened in 1886 and became a symbol of hope. New York boomed during the Roaring Twenties before the Wall Street Crash of 1929. New York City hosted the tallest building in the world from 1913–74. It is known as **Empire State Building** and has 102 stories.

Following a period of near-bankruptcy, New York City renewed its stature as a cultural center attracted more immigration and hosted the development of new music styles. The City became a media capital over the second half of the 20th century hosting most national news channels and broadcasts as well as globally-renowned national newspapers.



The view of Washington and Washington Monument



The Lincoln Memorial



The White House

The view of New York and the Statue of Liberty



Empire State Building

THE MUSEUMS

The **Metropolitan Museum of Art** of New York City colloquially "**the Met**" is the largest art museum in the Western Hemisphere. Its permanent collection contains over two million works. The main building at 1000 Fifth Avenue along the Museum Mile on the eastern edge of Central Park on Manhattan's Upper East Side is by area of one of the world's largest art museums. A much smaller second location, The Cloisters at Fort Tryon Park in Upper Manhattan, contains an extensive collection of art, architecture, and artifacts from medieval Europe.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art was founded in 1870 with its mission to bring art and art education to the American people. The museum's permanent collection consists of works of art from classical antiquity and ancient Egypt, paintings, and sculptures from nearly all the European masters, and extensive collections of American and modern art.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art maintains extensive holdings of African, Asian, Oceanian, Byzantine, and Islamic art. The museum is a home to encyclopedic collections of musical instruments, costumes, and accessories, as well as antique weapons and armor from around the world. Several notable interiors, ranging from 1st-century Rome through modern American design are installed in its galleries.



*The Metropolitan Museum of Art
in New York*

Let's walk through the halls of The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Some glimpses of American history



The hall of European painting



In the hall of Van Gogh's most famous painting

Guggenheim museum in New York

The Guggenheim is an art museum at Fifth Avenue on the corner of East 89th Street on the Upper East Side of Manhattan in New York City. It is the permanent home of a continuously expanding collection of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, early Modern, and contemporary art. The museum was established by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in 1939 as the Museum of Non-Objective Painting.

In 1959 the museum moved from rented space to its current building. The cylindrical building, wider at the top than at the bottom, was conceived as a "temple of the spirit". Its unique ramp gallery extends up from ground level in a long, continuous spiral along the outer edges of the building to end just under the ceiling skylight.

The museum's collection has grown over eight decades and is founded upon several important private collections, beginning with that of Solomon R. Guggenheim. In 2013, nearly 1.2 million people visited the museum, and it hosted the most popular exhibition in New York City



Guggenheim museum in New York



In one of the halls of Guggenheim museum

AMERICAN LITERATURE

American literature is literature written or produced in English in the United States of America. Before the founding of the United States, the Thirteen Colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States were heavily influenced by British literature. The American literary tradition thus is a part of the broader tradition of English-language literature. A small amount of literature exists in other immigrant languages. Furthermore a rich tradition of oral storytelling exists amongst Native American tribes.

Now American literature is counted to be the significant part of world literature due to prominent writers and their works.

James Fenimore Cooper

James Fenimore Cooper was an American writer of the first half of the 19th century. His historical romances depicting colonist and Indigenous characters from the 17th to the 19th centuries created a unique form of American literature.



After a stint on a commercial voyage Cooper served in the U.S. Navy as a midshipman where he learned the technology of managing sailing vessels which greatly influenced many of his novels and other writings. His best-known works are five historical novels of the frontier period, written between 1823 and 1841, known as the *Leatherstocking Tales*, which introduced the iconic American frontier scout Natty Bumppo. Among his more famous works is the romantic novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, often regarded as his masterpiece. Throughout his career he published numerous social, political, and historical works of fiction and non-fiction with the objective of countering European prejudices and nurturing an original American art and culture.

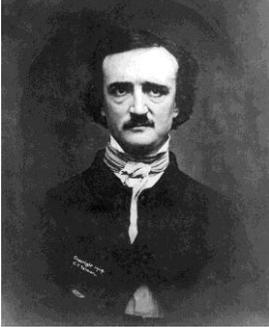


Task:

1. Why were Cooper's novels filmed many times?

Name the features that allowed doing that. Give the answer in 3 sentences.

Edgar Allan Poe



Edgar Allan Poe was an American writer, poet, editor, and literary critic. Poe is best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery. He is widely regarded as a central figure of Romanticism in the United States, and of American literature. Poe was one of the country's earliest practitioners of the short story and considered to be the inventor of the detective fiction genre as well as of science fiction. Poe is the first well-known American

writer to earn a living through writing alone, despite of a financially difficult life and career.

Poe and his works influenced literature around the world as well as specialized fields such as cosmology and cryptography. He and his work appear throughout popular culture in literature, music, films, and television.



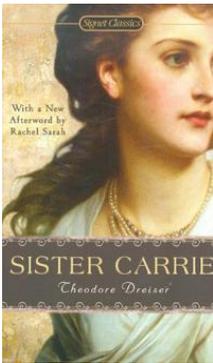
"The Fall of the House of Usher" is one of the mysterious stories by E. A. Poe

"Raven" is a tragic poem by E. A. Poe

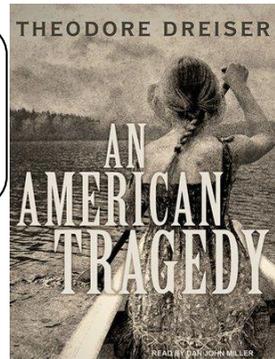


Theodore Dreiser

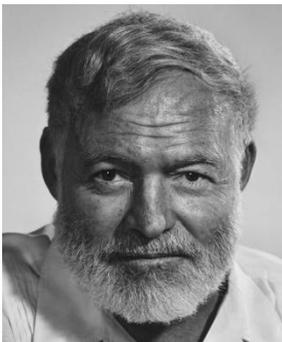
Theodore Dreiser was an American novelist and journalist of the realistic trend. His novels often featured main characters who succeeded at their objectives despite a lack of a firm moral code. His literary situations are very realistic.



"Sister Carrie" and "An American Tragedy" are best Dreiser's novels



Ernest Hemingway



Ernest Miller Hemingway was an American novelist, short-story writer, and journalist. His economical and understated style—which he termed “the iceberg theory”—had a strong influence on 20th-century fiction, while his adventurous lifestyle and public image brought him admiration from later generations. Hemingway produced most of his work between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s, and he was awarded the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature. He published seven novels, six short-story collections, and two nonfiction works. Three of his

novels, four short-story collections, and three nonfiction works were published posthumously. Many of his works are considered classics of American literature.

Hemingway was raised in Oak Park, Illinois. After high school he was a reporter for a few months before leaving for the Italian Front to enlist as an ambulance driver in World War I. In 1918 he was seriously wounded and returned home. His wartime experiences formed the basis for his novel *A Farewell to Arms*.

He worked as a foreign correspondent in Paris and fell under the influence of the modernist writers and artists of the 1920s' so called "Lost Generation" that expatriated community.

He almost died in 1954 after plane crashes with injuries leaving him in pain and ill health for much of the rest of his life. In 1959 he bought a house in Ketchum, Idaho, where in mid-1961 he committed suicide.



Hemingway's best novels



"The Old Man and the Sea" is the story about man's will and belief

PAINTING IN THE USA

Abstract expressionism, which was begun by a group of New York artists in the 1940, became the first American art movement to command the attention of artists abroad. Revolting against traditional graphic styles, the artists of this movement changed the goals and methods of art.

Abstract expressionists rejected traditional subject matter, such as the human body, still life or rural scenes. Instead, they focused on such things as the utilization of space, dimension, and surface texture, and the interrelationship of colors. The international influence of America's abstract expressionists was so great that the painting center of the world shifted from Paris to New York.

Among the movement's leaders were **Jackson Pollack** who is famous for his turbulent paint-splattered canvases, **Willem de Kooning**, who used savage brush strokes and intense colors and others.

During this period American sculptors developed new styles of their own.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s young artists reacted to abstract expressionism to produce works of "**mixed**" **media**. Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns integrated everyday objects such as photographs and newspaper clippings into their paintings.

The reaction to abstract expressionism continued with a movement called "**pop art**" ("pop" is short for "popular"). The members of this movement attempted to produce works of art that would reflect the influence of mass marketing, mass media, and other trends in American popular culture.

Important in the pop-art movement were Andy Warhol famous for his multiple rows of soup cans and multiple portraits of Marilyn Monroe and Roy Lichtenstein, recognized for his mimicry of well-known comic strips.

"Pop" was followed by "**Op**" **art**, based on the principle of optical illusion.

Recent trends in art emphasize variety and innovation. Movements of the 1970s and now include performance art, earth art, conceptual art, graffiti art, neo- and figural-expressionism, and neo-geo art.



The example of Abstract expressionism

A painting by Jackson Pollack



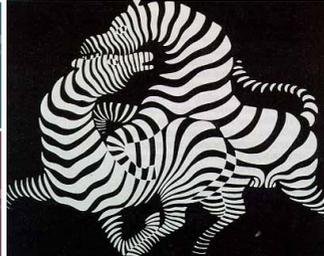
In the style of Willem de Kooning



"Mixed media" The work "Love is..."



"pop art"



"op art"

Rockwell Kent

Rockwell Kent was an American painter, printmaker, illustrator, writer, sailor, adventurer and voyager.

Kent found inspiration in the austerity and stark beauty of wilderness. He lived for extended periods of time in Winona, Minnesota, Newfoundland, Alaska, Vermont, Tierra del Fuego, Ireland and Greenland. His series of land and seascapes from these often forbidding locales convey the symbolist spirit evoking the mysteries and cosmic wonders of the natural world. "I don't want petty self-expression", Kent wrote, "I want the elemental, infinite thing; I want to paint the rhythm of eternity."



Rockwell Kent "Polar Expedition"

Task:

1. Choose any of the landscapes of Russian painters (Levitan or others). Compare them with R. Kent's landscapes.

TEATRE IN THE USA

Theater in the United States has been strongly influenced by European drama, but the **"musical"** is of truly American origin. The musical is a play with spoken lines, songs and dances. It was not until the 1940s and the production of **"Oklahoma"** began the change in style and content.

The basic plot of "Oklahoma" presented a love story, the characters in the play seemed more like real people and instead of the routine dancing ballet was introduced. Since "Oklahoma" many successful musical plays have appeared on the American stage. No longer just light and amusing, they often deal with serious themes, accompanied by sophisticated music and dancing. One example is **"West Side Story"**, a modern version of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" – a story of young lovers who died tragically. Set in New York City it portrays tense and hostile relationships between Puerto Ricans and native New Yorkers.

Another highly successful musical play was **"My Fair Lady"**, the musical version of a play by the Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw.



10 best Broadway musicals



"Chicago": musical in Broadway

Musical "Oklahoma"



"West Side Story" is a classical musical about love



Musical "My Fair Lady"



Task:

1. Answer the question: What are the main features of musical?

AMERICAN CINEMA

Born in **Hollywood** the motion picture became the monumental popular art form of the century. In Hollywood's golden age during the 1940s, the major studios were turning out over 400 movies each year.

Like most businessmen motion picture executives and entrepreneurs wanted to develop products that had mass appeal. Once they found a successful formula they repeated it in film after film. **Westerns, gangster films, comedies, and musicals** were some of the popular films that emerged as distinct genres.

Hollywood films appealed to tastes of American audience by reinforcing traditional myths, values, and beliefs. The western fused violence and rugged individualism into larger, mythical themes of taming the frontier, curbing lawlessness, and forging a nation. Entertaining comedies and musicals carried messages of aspiration and optimism. Class divisions were healed and everyone lived with happy ends. Audiences were charmed. During Hollywood's golden age, films, movie stars, and even the architecture of the theaters were glittering and glorious.

The movies have changed since television intervened. Film attendance declined sharply, conglomerates bought up studios, and Hollywood's old monopoly on stardom and American style was lost. Today's moviegoers are mostly teenagers. Their parents prefer television entertainment. The major film studios have adapted to the new viewing patterns by cutting back on production, targeting films to the younger audience, and creating new markets.

Studios have recaptured television audiences by renting their feature films to television networks and by producing low—budget made-for-TV movies and television series.

Although the golden age is past, films remain a popular and profitable form of entertainment in America.



Hollywood is the main film studio in the USA



Western-genre has its own philosophy



*“Gone with the Wind” –
10 Oscars*

MUSIC IN THE USA

Unique forms and styles of music have developed in America. **Ragtime, blues, jazz, country-western, rock 'n' roll**, as well as the musical are all American-born.

The black American music tradition has produced and influenced a variety of genres. Ragtime was the first black American music to gain wide popularity. Ragtime is most important for its association with the blues, which then inspired jazz, America's most original music form.

The blues evolved from African folk songs and church music. Sung by

soloists or featuring solo instruments, blues music often expresses disappointment or regret.

Jazz, now recognized as a world-wide art form, originated around the turn of the century among black musicians in the American South. The music was inspired by African culture but evolved directly from spirituals, ragtime, and blues. Jazz is characterized by improvisation and a lively attention to rhythm, something famous jazz musician Duke Ellington called “swing.”

By 1920s jazz had spread from the South and in the 1930s it reached its heyday of mass popularity as big band music. Louis Armstrong, a trumpeter and soloist, was one of the first well-known jazz singers.

Although the improvisational style of early jazz still survives today, jazz has moved on to new frontiers. In the middle of XX c. jazz musicians began combining the rhythms of rock 'n' roll and electronic instruments with traditional elements of jazz to form a blend of music called “fusion.” Today jazz is extremely popular in America and abroad. Jazz concerts draw thousands of listeners every year.

The influence of jazz is found in many types of American music. The music of George Gershwin, one of America's most popular song writers and composers, was strongly influenced by jazz. The concerto “Rhapsody in Blue” and the opera “Porgy and Bess” were two of his works which incorporated jazz.

Another popular type of music which came out of the American South is **country—western**. However, its cultural origin and musical sounds are totally different from jazz. The style of country western music has its roots in the folk songs and ballads of the early Scottish and English settlers in the southern colonies. The music developed over a long period with melodies and lyrics reflecting rural life in the Southeast and Southwest. The distinctive sound of country music depends on the guitar, banjo and fiddle. Lyrics generally focus on the sorrows of love or the economic hardships of poor whites.

Rock music has dominated the popular music scene ever since America was inundated with the new sound in the 1950s. Now Rock 'n' roll is very popular all over the world.

Louis Armstrong

Louis Daniel Armstrong was an American trumpeter and vocalist. He is among the most influential figures in jazz. His career spanned five decades and different eras in the history of jazz.



Coming to prominence in the 1920s as an inventive trumpet and cornet player, Armstrong was a foundational influence in jazz shifting the focus of the music from collective improvisation to solo performance. He earned a reputation at "cutting contests". He came to New York City where he became a featured and musically influential band soloist and recording artist.

With his instantly recognizable rich, gravelly voice Armstrong was also an influential singer and skillful improviser bending the lyrics and melody of a song. By the end of Armstrong's life his influence had spread to popular music in general. Armstrong was one of the first popular African-American entertainers to "cross over" to wide popularity with white (and international) audiences.

Task:

1. Here are the words of one of the best songs of Armstrong "Let my people go". Why are the words "Let my people go" repeated many times? For understanding that you should translate the song.

Let my people go

Louis Daniel Armstrong

Go down

Moses

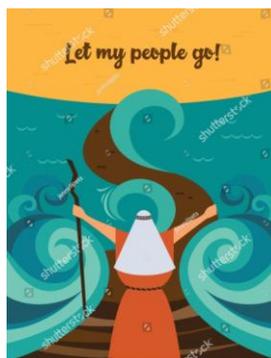
Way down in Egypt land

Tell old Pharaoh to **let my people go!**

When Israel was in Egypt land...

Let my people go!

Oppressed so hard they could not stand...



Let my people go!

So the God says:

Go down, Moses,

Way down in Egypt land

Tell old Pharaoh to **let my people go!**

So Moses went to Egypt land...

Let my people go!

He made old Pharaoh understand...

Let my people go!

Yes, the Lord said: "Go down, Moses,

Way down in Egypt land,

Tell old Pharaoh to **let my people go!**

Thus spoke the Lord, bold

Moses said:

Let my people go!

If not I'll strike, your first borns
dead.

Let my people go!

God-the Lord said: "Go down,
Moses,

Way down in Egypt land,

Tell old Pharaoh to **let my
people go!**

Tell old Pharaoh...

To let my people go!



"Let my people go!"

Country-western music

Country-western music is a genre of popular music that originated with blues and church music. Its popularized roots originate in the Southern and Southwestern United States of the early 1920s.

The term *country music* is used today to describe many styles and subgenres. The origins of country music are found in the folk music of working class Americans and blue-





collar American life. It has been inspired by American popular music, and American folk music which had its roots in Celtic music, early music of the British Isles, singing cowboys, corrido, ranchera, French folk music, African-American music, and other traditional folk music traditions.

Country music often consists of ballads and dance tunes with generally simple forms, folk lyrics, and harmonies often accompanied by string instruments such as banjos, electric and acoustic guitars, steel guitars. Blues has been used extensively throughout its recorded history.

In 2009, in the United States, country music was the most listened to rush hour radio genre.

Task

1. Why is country-western music so popular in America?

Elvis Presley

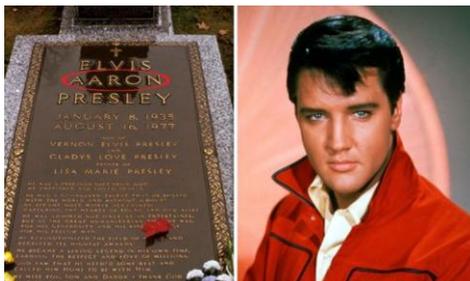
Elvis Presley was an American singer and actor. Dubbed the "King of Rock and Roll", he is regarded as one of the most significant cultural icons of the 20th century. His energized interpretations of songs and provocative performance style, combined with a singularly potent mix of influences across color lines during a transformative era in race relations, led him to great success.

In 1950s with a series of successful network television appearances and chart-topping records Presley became the leading figure of the newly popular sound of rock and roll.

Having sold over 500 million records worldwide, Presley is recognized as the best-selling solo music artist of all time by *Guinness World Records*. He was commercially successful in many genres, including pop, country, R&B, adult contemporary, and gospel. Presley won three Grammy Awards, received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award at age 36, and has been inducted into multiple music halls of fame.

Task:

1. Why do many of Presley's fans think that "Presley is alive" and the words at his grave are wrong?



The songs of protest

Protest songs in the United States are a tradition that dates back to the early 18th century and have persisted and evolved as an aspect of American culture through the present day.

Many American social movements have inspired protest songs spanning a variety of musical genres including but not limited to rap, folk, rock, and pop music. Though early 18th century songs stemmed from the American colonial period as well as in response to the Revolutionary war, protest songs continue to cover a wide variety of subjects. Protest songs typically serve to address some social, political, or economic concern through the means of musical composition. In the 19th century American protest songs focused heavily on topics including slavery, poverty, and the Civil War while the 20th century saw an increased popularity in songs pertaining to women's rights, economic injustice, and wars. In the 21st century popular protest songs address police brutality, racism and more.

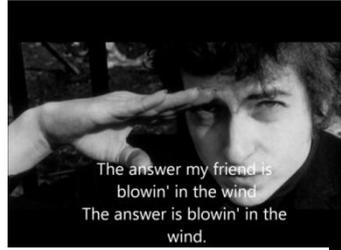
Task:

1. Listen to the song "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind". What is the meaning of these words? Give your reasons.

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

By Bob Dylan

... How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
How many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, and how many times must the
cannonballs fly
Before they're forever banned?



... The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind

... Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist
Before it is washed to the sea?
And how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head
And pretend that he just doesn't see?

... The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind

... Yes, and how many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
And how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows
That too many people have died?

... The answer, my friend, is blowin' in
the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind.



MODERN DANCE

Closely tied to developments in American music was modern dance, which emerged in America as a new art form early in the century. The creators of modern dance rejected the artificial formality of classical ballet. Instead, they sought to convey the innermost feelings of the human mind and body in simple, flowing dance movements.

The first and most influential leader of the movement was Isadora Duncan. Martha Graham's New York-based group became the best known modern dance company. America's newest generation of modern dance choreographers includes style features African dance elements and black music.

In the past three decades dance both ballet and modern has been the most rapidly developing performing art in the nation. New York City has become the dance center of the world.



Task:

1. Find any classical ballet ("Swan Lake" or any other) and American modern dance in the Internet. What are the differences in performance?

AMERICAN HOLIDAYS AND TRADITIONS

There are some holidays and traditions similar in Great Britain and the United States. But there is the difference. In the USA you can meet the holidays that can't be found in any other country.

Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving is a national holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States. It began as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest and of the preceding year. Although Thanksgiving has historical roots in religious and cultural traditions, it has long been celebrated as a secular holiday as well.



*The way of celebrating
Thanksgiving Day in America now.*

Task:

1. What are the historical roots of Thanksgiving Day? This picture will help you.



Independence Day

Independence Day is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the Declaration of Independence of the United States, on July 4, 1776. The Continental Congress declared that the thirteen American colonies were no longer subject of the monarch of Britain King George III and were now united, free, and independent states. The Congress had voted to declare independence two days earlier on 2 July but it was not

declared until 4 July. Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, games, family reunions, political speeches, and ceremonies in addition to various other public and private events celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States. Independence Day is the national day of the United States.



The historical view of Independence Day



This is how Independence Day is celebrated nowadays

You may read more about American traditions at p. 124.

Look at the slides “The Culture of the USA” and make up a **test** on it.

*AMERICA IN CLOSE-UP
THE ARTS*



Slide 1



- The stereotype:
culture in USA = TV+sports
 - But!
 - + theatre
 - + cinema+museums
- +pop/country/roc festivals+ etc...
- These activities are growing from year to year
 - The government support is very little
 - Promotion of arts is through private and commercial funding

Slide 2

- America is “**melting pot**” of languages and cultures.
- The artists try to create their own style.
- The styles of American art are as diverse as the people
- A lot of influences: European Arts, ethnic cultures



Slide 3

Museum Tour: Metropolitan,



Slide 4



• Classic Arts

• Impressionists

Slide 5

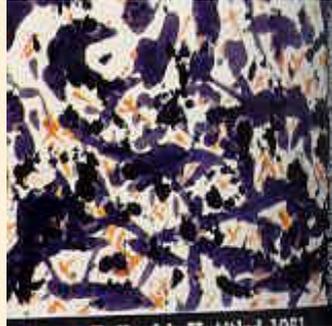
The Museum of Art



Slide 6

The main trend of American arts is
**The main trend in American culture is
innovations . They invented**

Abstract Arts



Slide 7



Slide 8

• Mixed media



• Pop art



Slide 9

Op art



Ragtime



Blues



Slide 10

Jazz

Country-western music

Rock



Slide 11

The musical



Slide 12

Modern dance



Hollywood films...



Slide 13

...What is next?



Slide 14

SIGHTS OF LONDON

London is one of the world's most enjoyable cities. Visited by tourists in the millions, the city offers them an astonishing variety of scenes. In this historic city the modern rubs shoulders with the old, the present is ever conscious of the past, the great and the small live side by side in mutual tolerance and respect, and in every part of London's busy and complex life there is to be found a very genuine affection for its traditions and its fortunes.

The first mayor of London was elected in 1193 but for more than a thousand years before that London had been a place of some importance. The Romans, the Saxons and the Danes settled here in turn, and after them the Normans came. With the passing years London continued to grow in importance and its position as the seat of government was firmly secured.

London survived the Plague which killed nearly 100,000 people and the Great Fire which followed. Little damage occurred during World War I, but World War II brought tremendous destruction. Many buildings of great historic value were laid in ruins and today the face of London is changed. Yet much was spared including the Tower, St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey.

London has buildings that express all the different areas of its history for London manages in a unique way to reflect its past and at the same time to fulfill the functions of a modern city. There is always something new to be discovered, some fresh approach to a familiar scene, some curious piece of history to be investigated.

The Houses of Parliament

From the centre of Westminster Bridge one can have a splendid view of the Houses of Parliament which spread magnificently on the north bank of the Thames. This structure is a remarkable example of Gothic architecture. The Clock Tower which contains the hour-bell called "Big Ben" is known the world over. The bell is named after Sir Benjamin Hall, the first Commissioner of Works when the Houses of Parliament were rebuilt in 1850s.

Royal Palaces and houses were built along the banks of the Thames in medieval days because the water was a busy way into and out of London.

The Houses of Parliament, called officially the Palace of Westminster, were formerly a palace for kings and queens. When the king was in residence at Westminster his court was likewise in residence. There not only Royal councils of bishops, nobles and ministers assembled but also that very special form of Council later known as the Parliament. The palace was used both as a royal residence and also as a parliament house until the sixteenth century. In the course of the sixteenth century when the royal family moved to the new palace within half a mile of Westminster – Whitehall Palace, the Westminster Palace was occupied by the Parliament and became its permanent home. So the site of Westminster has been involved with the government of England for 500 years.

The Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The House of Lords consists of just over 1,000 members of the different grades of nobility – dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons. In the House of Commons there are 635 members. The name of the “Commons” by which it is called does not signify the “common people”, but the local “communities” in different parts of the country. They are elected by secret ballot by men and women aged 18 and over. Every Parliament is limited to duration of five years. The life of Parliament is divided into Sessions. Each of these may last a year and usually begins early in November.

Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey is a fine Gothic building, which stands opposite the Houses of Parliament. It is the work of many hands and different ages. The oldest part of the building dates from the eighth century. It was a monastery – the West Minster. In the 11th century Edward the Confessor after years spent in France and after that founded a great Norman Abbey. In 200 years Henry III decided to pull down the Norman Abbey and build a more beautiful one after the style then prevailing in France. Since then the Abbey remains the most French of all English Gothic churches, higher than any other English church (103 feet) and much narrower. The towers were built in 1735–1740. One of the greater glories of the Abbey is the Chapel of Henry VII. The Chapel is of stone and glass, so wonderfully cut and sculptured that it seems unreal. It contains an interesting collection of swords and standards of the “Knights of the Bath”.

The Abbey is famous for its stained glass.

Since the far-off time of William the Conqueror Westminster Abbey has been the crowning place of the kings and queens of England. The Abbey is sometimes compared with a mausoleum, because there are tombs and memorials of almost all English monarchs, many statesmen, famous scientists, writers and musicians.

If you go past the magnificent tombstones of kings and queens, some made of gold and precious stones, past the gold-and-silver banners of the Order of the Garter which are hanging from the ceiling you will come to the Poets' Corner. There many of the greatest writers are buried: Geoffrey Chaucer, Samuel Johnson, Charles Dickens, Alfred Tennyson, Thomas Hardy and Rudyard Kipling. Here too, though these writers are not buried in Westminster Abbey, are memorials to William Shakespeare and John Milton, Burns and Byron, Walter Scott, William Makepeace Thackeray and the great American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

St. Paul's Cathedral

St. Paul's Cathedral is the work of the famous architect Sir Christopher Wren. It is said to be one of the finest pieces of architecture in Europe. Work on Wren's masterpiece began in 1675 after a Norman church when old St. Paul's, was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. For 35 years the building of St. Paul's Cathedral went on and Wren was an old man before it was finished.

From far away you can see the huge dome with a golden ball and cross on the top. The interior of the Cathedral is very beautiful. It is full of monuments. The most important, perhaps, is the one dedicated to the Duke of Wellington. After looking round you can climb 263 steps to the Whispering Gallery which runs round the dome. It is called so because if someone whispers close to the wall on one side a person with his ear close to the wall on the other side can hear what is said. But if you want to reach the foot of the ball you have to climb 637 steps.

As for Christopher Wren who is now known as "the architect of London", he found his fame only after his death. He was buried in the Cathedral with Nelson, Wellington and Sir Joshua Reynolds nearby.

The Tower of London

The Tower on the north bank of the Thames is one of the most ancient buildings of London. It was founded in the 11th century by William the Conqueror. But each monarch left some kind of personal mark on it. For many centuries the Tower has been a fortress, a palace, a prison and royal treasury. It is now a museum of arms and as one of the strongest fortresses in Britain it has the Crown Jewels.

The grey stones of the Tower could tell terrible stories of violence and injustice. Many saddest and cruelest events took place within the walls of the Tower. It was here that Thomas More, the greatest humanist, was falsely accused and executed. Among famous prisoners executed at the Tower were Henry VIII's wives Anna Boleyn and Catherine Howard.

When Queen Elizabeth was a princess she was sent to Tower by Mary Tudor ("Bloody Mary") and kept prisoner for some time.

The ravens whose forefathers used to find food in the Tower still live here as part of its history. There is a legend that if the ravens disappear the Tower will fall. That is why the birds are carefully guarded.

The White Tower was built by William the Conqueror to protect and control the City of London. It is the oldest and the most important building surrounded by other towers which all have different names.

The Tower is guarded by the Yeomen Warders popularly called "Beefeaters". There are two letters, E. R., on the front of their tunics. They stand for the Queen's name Elizabeth Regina. The uniform is as it used to be in Tudor times.

Their everyday uniform is black and red but on state occasions they wear a ceremonial dress: fine red state uniforms with the golden and black stripes and the wide lace-collar which were in fashion in the 16th century.

SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare (26 April 1564 – 23 April 1616) was an English playwright, poet and actor. He is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's greatest dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon" (or simply "the Bard"). His extant works, including collaborations, consist of some 39 plays, 154 sonnets, three long narrative poems, and a few other verses, some of uncertain authorship. His plays have been translated into every major living

language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. His works continue to be studied and reinterpreted.

Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. At the age of 18 he married Anne Hathaway with whom he had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith. Sometime between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. At age 49 (around 1613), he appears to have retired to Stratford, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive; this has stimulated considerable speculation about such matters as his physical appearance, his religious beliefs and whether the works attributed to him were written by others.

Shakespeare produced most of his known works between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were primarily comedies and histories and are regarded as some of the best works produced in these genres. He wrote mainly tragedies until 1608, among them *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, all considered to be among the finest works in the English language. In the last phase of his life he wrote tragicomedies (also known as romances) and collaborated with other playwrights.

Many of Shakespeare's plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy in his lifetime. However, in 1623, two fellow actors and friends of Shakespeare's, John Heminges and Henry Condell published a more definitive text known as the First Folio a posthumous collected edition of Shakespeare's dramatic works that included all but two of his plays. Shakespeare could be named by the now famous epithet: "not of an age, but for all time".

BRITAIN ROUND THE CALENDAR

New Year in England

In England the New Year is not as widely or as enthusiastically observed as Christmas. Some people ignore it completely and go to bed at the same time as usual on New Year's Eve. Many others however do celebrate it in one way or another, the type of celebration varying very much according to the local custom, family tradition and personal taste.

The most common type of celebration is a New Year party either a family party or one arranged by a group of young people. This usually begins at about eight o'clock and goes on until the early hours of the morning. There is a lot of drinking, mainly beer, wine, gin and whisky; sometimes the hosts make a big bowl of punch which consists of wine, spirits, fruit juice and water in varying proportions. There is usually a buffet supper of cold meat, pies, sandwiches, savories, cakes and biscuits. At midnight the radio is turned on, so that everyone can hear the chimes of Big Ben, and on the hour a toast is drunk to the New Year, and Auld Lang Syne is sung.

Then the party goes on.

Another popular way of celebrating the New Year is to go to a New Year's dance. Most hotels and dance halls hold a special dance on New Year's Eve. The hall is decorated, there are several different bands and the atmosphere is very gay.

The most famous celebration is in London round the statue of Eros in Piccadilly Circus where crowds gather and sing and welcome the New Year. In Trafalgar Square there is also a big crowd and someone usually falls into the fountain.

Those who have no desire or no opportunity to celebrate the New Year themselves can sit and watch other people celebrating on television. It is an indication of the relative unimportance of the New Year in England that the television producers seem unable to find any traditional English festivities for their programs and usually show Scottish ones.

January 1st, New Year's Day is now a public holiday fortunately for those who like to celebrate most of the night. Some people send New Year cards and give presents but this is not a widespread custom. This is the traditional time for making "New Year resolutions", for example, to give up smoking, or to get up earlier. However, these are generally more talked about than put into practice.

Also on New Year's Day the "New Year Honors List" is published in the newspapers, i. e. a list of those who are to be given honors of various types - knighthoods, etc.

First foot

The first visitor to enter a house on New Year's morning is commonly known in Great Britain as the First Foot. In Yorkshire he is sometimes called

the Lucky Bird, in the Isle of Man the Quaaltagh. Wherever he appears he is a personage of great importance. He may be a chance caller or a man on some errand unconnected with the anniversary or he may be the ceremonial First Foot who comes on purpose to let the New Year into the house and bring good luck to the family. Whichever he is, he is traditionally supposed to influence the fortunes of the householders in the following twelve months, both by the gifts he brings and by his own character and appearance. Hence it is essential everywhere that he should be an individual with certain definite qualities, though what these are varies a little from one region to another.

In Scotland and northern England the custom of First-Footing in the early hours of January 1st is still kept up with great vigor. The First Foot comes as soon as possible after midnight has struck. He brings symbolic gifts of food or fuel or money as tokens of prosperity in the year that has just begun. Sometimes instead of these presents or in addition to them he carries a bunch of evergreens as a promise of continuing life. Nothing must be taken out of the house before these gifts have been brought in nor should any one go outside until he has arrived. He must be admitted by the front door and since he is a luck-bringer, he must be hospitably entertained with food and plentiful supplies of wine or spirits.

Usually the First Foot greets all within as he crosses the threshold and is at once loudly welcomed in return. In some parts of Scotland however he does not speak until he has laid a peat or a coal upon the fire. This silent entry and first concern with the hearth, the life-centre of the house, has been recorded in other regions also, and may perhaps represent an older form of the rite. In his *English Festivals* (1947), Lawrence Whistler describes an impressive version of the ceremony in which the First Foot carried an evergreen branch in one hand and a sprig of mistletoe in the other. He entered in silence, crossed the room to the hearth, and there laid the green branch upon the flames and the mistletoe on the mantelpiece above. No one spoke while he did this and only when he turned to wish the assembled company a happy New Year general silence was broken.

The ceremonial First Foot may be one of a band of young men going round from house to house or a friend of the family who has arranged to let the New Year in for them. Sometimes a man of the right type will undertake to visit every house in a given street or district. Strictly speaking the First Foot should always be someone from outside the home but occasionally when no such early morning visitor is expected a male member of the

household will go out just before midnight and be ceremonially let in again as soon as the hour has struck with the appropriate gifts in his hand. These in England, are usually a piece of bread and a piece of coal as symbols of food and warmth and a coin or a little salt to ensure wealth in the coming year. In Scotland a bottle of whisky is often included or a compound of spirits, beer, sugar, and eggs known as a Het Pint. Round Dundee and in the fishing villages of the East Coast a red herring is a lucky gift as a promise of good fishing to come, and in some Scottish rural areas a sheaf of wheat symbolizing a good corn-harvest is often carried. For the First Foot to come empty-handed is a very bad omen for this means losses and poverty before the year's end.

To be a true luck-bringer the First Foot should be vigorous and healthy and if possible young and good-looking. If he is flat-footed or cross-eyed or lame if his eyebrows meet across his nose if he is dressed in black or appears to be ailing, the omens for the coming twelve months are bad. In most areas, a dark-haired or dark-complexioned man is lucky though there are local exceptions to this rule. In some east Yorkshire districts, for instance, and in parts of Lincolnshire and Northumberland the First Foot must be fair. Red hair is very widely disliked. In some counties a bachelor is best, in others married man. Children and adolescent boys are usually popular first visitors, and so in some regions is a man known to be a footling, that is, one who was born feet foremost and who is consequently supposed to have magical powers of healing.

Until about sixty or seventy years ago it was customary in some parts of England for Christmas, as well as New Year to be ceremonially let in by a First Foot, or Lucky Bird.

The accepted First Foot of Christmas was a man or a boy, of the right type, who came very early on Christmas morning. He entered by the front door and in many places walked right through the house going into every room, and leaving finally by the back door. Unlike the New Year counterpart he brought no symbolic gifts, though he usually carried a sprig of evergreen. It was however essential that something should be given to him. In East Yorkshire he was sometimes given bread, salt, and a small coin as soon as he crossed the threshold. Elsewhere the customary gifts were sixpence or a shilling and a generous portion of Christmas cake or cheese, with cider, ale, or home-made wine. Unless these or other gifts were made to the Christmas luck-bringer, very bad luck would follow during the coming year.

Easter

Good Friday

For centuries Good Friday has been observed by Christians everywhere as the most solemn fast of the year, a day of penitence and mourning when the Crucifixion is commemorated. Good Friday is an official holiday in Britain, and for many it has come to mean chiefly the first opportunity in the year to escape from the town to the seaside or into the country. Yet even among those who don't go to church on Good Friday there's often a deep feeling that it is a special day. This manifests itself in superstitious fear that to do one's customary work will somehow bring misfortune. Until recently coalminers refused to work on Good Friday, believing that there would be a disaster in the mine if they did. Fishermen used to consider it both impious and ill-omened to put to sea on Good Friday. And there are still housewives who believe that to wash clothes on Good Friday is to provoke misfortune, perhaps a death in the family.

Easter

Easter is the English name of the ecclesiastical festival commemorating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Churches expect their members to receive Holy Communion at Easter. The Roman Catholic Church has many other special ceremonies pertaining to Easter. British Nonconformists formally repudiated the keeping of Easter in the 17th century, but now commonly observe it.

Some pagan customs associated with the vernal equinox were adopted by the Christian Church. Easter eggs have their origin in the fact that eggs were forbidden during Lent and restored at Easter; the notion that they symbolize resurrection is comparatively modern.

Ancient traditions

Easter is a time when certain old traditions are observed whether it is celebrated as the start of spring or a religious festival. In England it is a time for the giving and receiving of presents which traditionally take the form of an Easter egg for the Easter Bonnet Parade and hot cross buns. Nowadays Easter eggs are usually made of chocolate, but the old custom of dyeing or painting egg-shells is still maintained in some country districts. The Easter egg is by far the most popular emblem of Easter but fluffy little chicks, baby

rabbits and spring-time flowers like daffodils, dangling catkins and the arum lily are also used to signify the Nature's reawakening.

Easter eggs

Wherever Easter is celebrated Easter eggs are usually to be found. In their modern form they are frequently artificial, mere imitations of the real thing, made of chocolate or marzipan or sugar or of two pieces of colored and decorated cardboard fitted together to make an egg-shaped case containing some small gift. These are the Easter eggs of commerce which now appear in shop-windows almost as soon as and sometimes even before Ash Wednesday is past, and by so doing lose much of their original festival significance. They are however comparative newcomers, hardly more than a hundred years old. Artificial eggs do not seem to have been used before the middle of last century, and popular as they are today, they have not yet entirely displaced the true Easter egg of tradition.

This is a real egg, hard-boiled, dyed in bright colors and sometimes elaborately decorated. It still appears upon countless breakfast-tables on Easter Day or is hidden about the house and garden for the children to find. It is used in games like egg-rolling and egg-shackling. Like its artificial counterpart it is one of the most widespread of Easter gifts, and it is also the oldest with an ancestry running far back into pre-Christian times.

Coloring and decorating the festival eggs seems to have been customary since time immemorial.

There are many ways of tinting and decorating the eggs, some simple and some requiring a high degree of skill. They can be dipped into a prepared dye or more usually boiled in it, or they may be boiled inside a covering of onion peel. In the household accounts of Edward I for 1290, there is an entry of eighteen pence spent upon "four hundred and a half of eggs", which were to be covered with leaf-gold, or else "stained" by boiling, and then distributed to members of the Royal household. Ordinary commercial dyes are often used today for coloring but originally only natural ones, obtained from flowers, leaves, mosses, bark, wood-chips, or other sources, were employed. In England, gorse-blossom was commonly used for yellow, cochineal for scarlet, and log woodchips for a rich purple. Spinach leaves gave a fine green, and so did the petal of the purple anemone called the Pasqueflower. The outer skin of an onion, wrapped round an egg and boiled with, is still very often used to obtain a delicate mottled yellow, or a

pleasant brown. Similarly if strips colored rag or ribbon are bound on, a marbled effect is produced.

One or two of the most beautifully ornamented Easter eggs would be saved and kept in tall ale-glasses in a corner cupboard, or some other place where they could be easily seen. An egg that is boiled really hard will last for years; some very fine specimens, originally decorated for the poet's children, still preserved in the Wordsworth Museum at Grasmere. Here and there also, in cottages or farmhouses others have survived as relics of Easters long gone by. But naturally they are scarce since only a very few eggs, cherished for superstitious or sentimental reasons, ever survived the first year. The majority were either eaten during the festival, or broken to pieces in the vigorous egg-games that were played this season.

Egg-rolling

Egg-rolling is a traditional Easter pastime which still flourishes in northern England, Scotland, Ulster, the Isle of Man, and Switzerland. It takes place on Easter Sunday or Monday and consists of rolling colored, hard-boiled eggs down a slope until they are cracked and broken after which they are eaten by their owners. In some districts this is a competitive game, the winner being the player whose egg remains longest undamaged, but more usually, the fun consists simply of the rolling and eating. This is evidently the older form of the custom, since egg-rolling does not appear to have been originally a game to be lost or won. In the Hebrides formerly it provided an opportunity for divination. Each player marked his or her egg with an identifying sign, and then watched to see how it fared as it sped down the slope. If it reached the bottom unscathed, the owner could expect good luck in the future but if it was broken misfortune would follow before the year was out. Similarly at Connel Ferry in Argyllshire, where it was customary for young men to roll their eggs in one place, and for young women to roll theirs in another, the man or girl whose egg went farthest and most smoothly would be the first person to marry in that particular group.

Any handy bank or hillock or slanting lawn may be used for egg-rolling but in some districts there are traditional sites. Thus, the customary ground at Preston, in Lancashire, is Avenham Park where on Easter Monday very large crowds of adults and children annually congregate, and thousands of gaily-colored eggs can be seen rolling and bouncing down the steep grassy hillside towards the River Ribble. Here it is usual to bring oranges to eat with

the broken eggs, and sometimes these are rolled as well. This of course is a purely modern innovation, intended simply to add to the fun; but perhaps the addition of these golden sun-like globes is not altogether inappropriate in a custom which is sometimes said to have been originally a solar rite.

Hot cross buns

Eating hot cross buns at breakfast on Good Friday morning is a custom which still flourishes in most English households. Formerly, these round, spiced cakes marked with a cross, eaten hot, were made at home by housewives who rose at dawn for the purpose or by local bakers who worked through the night to have them ready for delivery to their customers in time for breakfast. In towns and especially in London street vendors used to come out early in the morning, carrying trays or baskets full of hot buns covered by a blanket and white cloth to preserve the heat, and crying as they went:

Hot Cross Buns!

One-a-penny, two-a-penny,

Hot Cross Buns!

They made a cheerful noise which was one of the distinctive sounds of Good Friday. But they vanished from the streets when the bakers who supplied them with their wares ceased to work at night; and now that far fewer women than formerly do their own baking, the bun that appears on the Good Friday breakfast-table has usually been bought on the previous day, and simply re-heated for the meal.

There is an old belief that the true Good Friday bun – that is, one made on the anniversary itself – never goes moldy, and in fact if properly made in the traditional manner and kept in a dry place, it very rarely does so. It was once also supposed to have curative powers, especially for ailments like dysentery, diarrhea, whooping-cough, and the complaint known as “summer sickness”. Within living memory it was still quite usual in country districts for a few buns to be set aside each year, hardened in the oven, and hung from the kitchen ceiling until they were needed. When illness came as much as was necessary was finely grated and mixed with milk or water to make a medicine which the patient drank. In some areas powdered buns mixed in a warm mash were occasionally given to ailing cattle.

Hot cross buns have a long ancestry running backwards into pre-Christian times. Small cakes made of wheaten flour and marked with a cross were eaten in spring by the pagan Greeks and Romans, particularly at the festival of Diana which was celebrated at the Vernal Equinox. The early Saxons also seem to have eaten similar cakes round about the same March date. It is certain that hot cross buns were

popular in England by the early eighteenth century, and they have remained so ever since.

London's Easter Parade

London greets the spring and its early visitors with a truly spectacular Easter Parade in Battersea Park on Easter Sunday each year. It is sponsored by the London Tourist Board and is usually planned around a central theme related to the history and attractions of London. The great procession or Parade begins at 3 p. m. The parade consists of a great many interesting and decorated floats, entered by various organizations in and outside the metropolis. Some of the finest bands in the country take part in the parade. At the rear of the parade there is usually the very beautiful Jersey float created from thousands of lovely spring blooms and bearing the Easter Princess and her attendants.

May Day (May 1)

May Day (May 1) festivities probably originated in the Roman Floralia festival in honour of Flora, goddess of flowers. In England flowers and boughs of hawthorn (may) were brought from the woods, the prettiest girl in the village was chosen queen of the May and crowned with flowers, maypoles were set up, around which dancers revolved, each holding a colored ribbon attached to the top of the pole and plaiting and unplaiting those ribbons in the course of their evolutions. Maypole dancing was disapproved by the Puritans of the 16th and 17th centuries as an idolatrous survival and was forbidden under the Commonwealth. May Day was also the traditional holiday for chimney-sweeps. For the Celtic May Day festival called Beltane fires were kindled on the hilltops.

May 1 – day of Solidarity

After the bloody suppression of demonstrations for the eight-hour day in the US on May 1, 1886, American trade unions and the Socialist International decided in 1889 to hold such demonstrations everywhere.

Since then May Day (a public holiday now) has been a barometer of working-class militancy, reflecting the changes in the international situation as well as in industrial struggle at home.

Maypole

The Maypole is an ancient fertility emblem belonging to the beginning of Summer and it also represents a tree; indeed, at one time it was a tree, brought in

from the woods with ceremony, and set up on the village green. In the darkness of the early morning the young people went out on May Day and cut down a tall young tree lopped off most of its branches leaving only a few at the top and so brought it home, to be adomed with flowers and garlands, and to serve as a place for their dances.

Sometimes the parish possessed a standing Maypole, a permanent shaft which remained in position all the year and was freshly painted and adorned when May Day came round. A few still stand or rather their descendants do on the traditional site for the average age of a Maypole is not much more than fifteen years. After that it begins to rot at the foot and has to be renewed. These permanent poles are usually very tall. That at Welford-on-Avon with its bright red, circular stripes like a barber's pole is seventy feet high that at Barwick-in-Elmet, near Leeds is even taller rising to eighty or ninety feet. This pole is taken down every three years on Easter Monday and set up again on Whit Tuesday. The arrangements are in the hands of three elected Pole Men. While it is down the Maypole is re-painted and ever so often when it becomes necessary, replaced, and its four garlands renewed.

There are still many good Maypoles today. Most schools have them on May Da, or on some convenient day during the month, and some villages maintain the old tradition especially in places where there standing-poles.

Mayqueen

In most modern revivals of the old May Day celebrations the central figure is commonly the May Queen, usually a schoolgirl elected by her fellows and crowned by her predecessor of the year before or by some local notability. Formerly she was not a child, but a young woman, the prettiest girl in the area or the most popular, and she was not usually alone as she is now. There was often a May King who reigned with her or a Lord and Lady of the May. In the Isle of Man until about the end of the eighteenth century May Day was marked by a battle between the Queen of May and the Queen of Winter. The latter was a man dressed in women's clothes. Both queens had followers dressed in a manner appropriate to summer or winter, and both had a captain to command their forces. In the course of time this elaborate custom died out and the battle was forgotten. Only the Summer procession remained later known as the Maceboard and composed of little girls who went from house to house selling small pieces of ribbon which were called "the Queen's favor".

The May King who was once the Queen's partner has vanished now from almost every place where he once reigned, but the Lord and Lady of the May still survive in some parts of the English Midlands. They were young people chosen to preside over the local celebrations by the people of the village though occasionally the Lady was chosen directly by the Lord. They were not crowned and in fact it is only since Ruskin made the custom popular in the late nineteenth century that the coronation of a child-Queen has become so important a part of the ceremonies in so many districts. In Oxfordshire an eye-witness describing village May procession in 1952 remarks that the Lord and Lady followed the Garland, which led the way, and were themselves followed by boys carrying four decorated staves known as Maypoles. Whenever any money was given at any of the houses the procession visited, the Lord kissed the Lady under the four Maypoles which were crossed over their heads.

Late summer bank holiday

On these bank holidays the townsfolk usually flock into the country and to the sea coast. If the weather is fine many families take a picnic-lunch or tea with them and enjoy their meal in the open. Some people go camping to some unspoiled rural or coastal spot. Others will go to a Safari, Wildlife or theme park, all offering family activities and entertainment or visit stately homes, most of which now belong to the national Trust. At some old castles in Scotland tourists might watch a historical battle staged by enthusiastic amateurs.

Seaside towns, such as Blackpool and Great Yarmouth with their Pleasure Beaches and Brighton with its Palace Pier, are invaded by thousands of trippers who come in cars and coaches, trains, motor cycles and bicycles. Great amusement parks like Southern Kursaal do a roaring trade with their scenic railways, shooting galleries, water-shoots, Crazy Houses, Haunted Houses and so on. Trippers eat and drink the weirdest mixture of stuff you can imagine, hot dogs, hamburgers and other fast food, sea food like cockles, mussels, whelks and shrimps, ice-lollies, ice creams, crisps, coke, fruit drinks, beer, everything you can imagine.

In parks, large or small, visitors are encouraged to take part in various competitions and games. Of various sporting activities team games seem to be losing in popularity as compared with individual sports such as cycling, windsurfing and hang-gliding. During bank holidays many people will be participating in all these sports, weather permitting, of course.

Bank Holiday is also an occasion for big sports meetings at places like the White City Stadium, mainly all kinds of athletics. There are also horse race meetings all over the country, and most traditional of all, there are large fairs, with swings, roundabouts, coconut shies, a Punch and Judy show, hoop-la stalls and every kind of side-show including, in recent years, bingo. These fairs are pitched on open spaces of common land, and the most famous of them is the huge one on Hampstead Heath near London. It is at Hampstead Heath you will see the Pearly Kings, those Cockney costers (street traders), who wear suits or frocks with thousands of tiny pearl buttons stitched all over them, also over their caps and hats in case of their Queens. They hold horse and cart parades in which prizes are given for the smartest turn out. Horses and carts are gaily decorated. Many Londoners will visit Whipsnade Zoo. There is also much boating activity on the Thames, regattas at Henley and on other rivers and the English climate being what it is, it invariably rains.

Guy Fawkes night (bonfire night) – November 5

Guy Fawkes Night is one of the most popular festivals in Great Britain. It commemorates the discovery of the so-called Gunpowder Plot and is widely celebrated throughout the country. Below you will find the necessary information concerning the Plot, which as he will see, may never have existed and the description of the traditional celebrations.

Gunpowder Plot. Conspiracy to destroy the English Houses of Parliament and King James I when the latter opened Parliament on Nov. 5, 1605 engineered by a group of Roman Catholics as a protest against anti-Papist measures. In May 1604 the conspirators rented a house adjoining the House of Lords, from which they dug a tunnel to a vault below that house where they stored 36 barrels of gunpowder. It was planned that when king and parliament were destroyed the Roman Catholics should attempt to seize power. Preparations for the plot had been completed when, on October 26, one of the conspirators wrote to a kinsman, Lord Monteagle, warning him to stay away from the House of Lords. On November 4 a search was made of the parliament vaults and the gunpowder was found together with Guy Fawkes (1570–1606), an English Roman Catholic in the pay of Spain (which was making political capital out of Roman Catholics' discontent in England). Fawkes had been commissioned to set off the explosion. Arrested and tortured he revealed the names of the conspirators, some of whom were killed resisting arrest. Fawkes was hanged. Detection of

the plot led to increased repression of English Roman Catholics. The Plot is still commemorated by an official ceremonial search of the vaults before the annual opening of Parliament, also by the burning of Fawkes's effigy and the explosion of fireworks every Nov. 5.

Famous gunpowder plot – or infamous plot

According to another theory the Plot never existed at all. The Government wanted an excuse to blacken the Catholics and tighten the laws against them. For this a scare and a smear were needed. Consequently, Robert Cecil, the King's "little beagle" – and no doubt at all he was as crafty as they come – got hold of a number of the more disreputable young Catholic gentry (and ex-Catholic and pseudo-Catholic, the distinctions not always being very clear in those confused times), either by blackmail or straight bribery. Among these the Plot was contrived with full Government support and efforts made to compromise some leading Jesuits and genuine Catholic gentry. The so-called conspirators, of course, were promised rewards and a safe get-away. Then at the right time the Plot was "discovered", and Cecil double-crossed his dupes, all of whom were disposed of in ways that prevented them from giving away the game. A number of innocent Catholics whom the Government wanted out of the way were conveniently executed on faked-up evidence. Certainly the Government profited politically.

We have here two rival theories about the Gunpowder Plot: the truth is so deeply buried that we are not likely to discover it.

Remember, remember

Remember, remember
The Fifth of November.
Gunpowder, treason and plot,
For I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

Guy Fawkes night

Guy Fawkes must be one of the most popular villains in history judging by the spectacular manner in which his wicked escapade is celebrated on November 5 each year.

In the last centuries many of these celebrations were wild indeed with home-made fireworks, blazing barrels of tar and huge bonfires in the streets. The windows of shops and houses had to be boarded up, and injuries were many. Fortunately those days have gone and regulations have been tightened up.

Lewes, Sussex, is noted for its Guy Fawkes celebrations now a highly organized event attracting thousands of visitors. There are torchlight processions and pageantry with official Bonfire Societies to help with the various displays. The traditional tar barrel is still a feature but it now ends its fiery career safely in the river.

There is an extremely well-organized celebration at Winchester, Hampshire. College students and many other organizations in the city prepare elaborate guys, for which prizes are awarded. The guy awarded the first prize has the honor of being the first to be cast upon the huge bonfire, the other prize-winners following in order of merit. Coffee and hot-dogs are in plentiful supply, and a grand time is had by the thousands of onlookers.

The Guy Fawkes Carnival held at Bridgewater, Somerset, on the Thursday nearest to November 5th, is believed to date back unbroken except for the war years to the original event in 1605. The carnival is noted for the many thousands of "squibs" which are used. For many generations these were made in the homes and local shops but for safety reasons these were banned and only factory-made ones are permitted.

Penny for the Guy

When November 5 comes, many people feel that they should give their dog a sedative, for some dogs get very nervous when they hear loud bangs, and the evening of Guy Fawkes Day is sure to be noisy if there are children living in the neighborhood in England.

November 5 is a day on which traditionally children are allowed, under proper supervision, to let off fireworks to make a bonfire and burn on it the figure of a ragged dummy (a "guy") made of old clothes, straw, and – if possible – one of father's oldest hats. Even the smaller children are allowed to stay up until it is really dark, so that they can admire the rockets that burst in the sky and send down a shower of many-colored sparks.

In the days before Guy Fawkes Day some children may be seen going about the streets with their faces blackened, and wearing some kind of

disguise. Sometimes they have a little cart or an old pram, and in it there is a "guy"; they ask the passers-by to spare "a penny for the guy". With the coppers they get they buy fireworks.

Searching the Houses of Parliament

The memory of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 is preserved by many cheerful customs in various parts of Great Britain, and by one dignified ceremony that takes place in London before the Opening of Parliament. This is the searching by a detachment of Yeomen of the Guard of the cellars under the Palace of Westminster either on the evening before the Opening or more usually on the morning of the day itself. The Yeomen in their scarlet and gold uniforms come from the Tower of London to the Princess' Chamber in the House of Lords and there in the presence of a number of the Palace officials they are given old candle-lanterns for use during the ceremony. As soon as the order to search has been received, they set out on a prolonged tour of the basements, vaults, and cellars below the building. Carrying their lighted lanterns in their hands, and firmly ignoring the existence of the very efficient electric lighting, they search every cranny and crevice, every corner and conceivable hiding-place, to satisfy themselves that no gunpowder barrels, bombs, or infernal machines have been anywhere concealed with intent to blow up Sovereign, Lords, and Commons. When they have proved by personal and most careful inspection that all is well, a message is sent to the Queen, the Yeomen are given some well earned refreshment and return whence they came and Parliament is then free to assemble without fear of disaster.

It needs hardly be said that the safety of the reigning monarch, ministers, peers, and elected members of Parliament does not really depend upon this picturesque last-minute ceremony. Nevertheless there was a night in 1605, when it did so depend upon a grimly earnest and quite search through the multifarious cellars that then under ran the Palace of Westminster, and it is this event which the modern ceremony is traditionally supposed to commemorate. In fact there does not seem to be any real evidence for the connection. Some authorities think that regular inspections of the cellars did not begin until the time of the Popish Plot scare in the latter half of the seventeenth century. However that may be, there is no doubt that the ceremonial search made by the Yeomen of the Guard before the State Opening of Parliament is as much a reminder of the Gunpowder Plot for most people as any bonfires blazing and rockets soaring heavenwards on the night of November 5.

Notwithstanding the candles the search now made is a real one, and certainly any secret enemy of the Queen and Parliament would find it hard to conceal any material evidence of evil intentions from the keen eyes of the Yeomen of the Guard.

Christmas Christmas time

Christmas, or a similar festival, has been celebrated from the earliest days of recorded history, and each era and race has pasted a colorful sheet of new customs and traditions over the old.

Telling the story of Christmas is like peeling away centuries of old wallpapers. "And she brought forth her first-born son and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room at the inn." That was how St. Luke described the nativity; St. Matthew provided a few more details: "Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of King Herod." The early Christians wanted to venerate the birthday of the Savior but they hit a snag: neither Luke nor Matthew had mentioned the time of day, nor the date in the year. Many and furious debates were held to decide upon a date. During the fourth century the Christians of Western Europe settled on 25 December. The Eastern Church at first chose 6 January but by the fifth century they too agreed to 25 December. The reasoning behind this held a pleasant logic; 25 March was a date sacred since pre-Christian times. The festival of spring celebrating creation and the return of life to the soil had always been held on the 25th, and the Church took over the date to commemorate the Annunciation of the Virgin, the Church's own celebration of fertility. The date for the Nativity was reached by adding nine months on to 25 March!

The date of Christmas also dovetailed in neatly with the winter festival of the Norsemen, Yule, which celebrated the winter solstice and the returning sun. King Hakon the Good actually decreed that the Yule festival should run concurrently with Christmas, that everyone should brew malt with his ale and keep Yule holy in his own way. Many old pagan customs leaked through into the new Christian festival of Christmas. (Anglia, 1979)

Christmas is an annual festival, observed on 25 December, in commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Its observance as a Christian festival dates from the 4th century, when it gradually superseded Epiphany (6 January, still kept as Christmas in the Armenian Church).

In Britain this day was a festival long before the conversion to Christianity. The English historian the Venerable Bede relates that "the ancient peoples of Angli began the year on the 25th of December, and the

very night was called in their tongue "modranecht", that is "mother's night". Thus it is not surprising that any social customs connected with the celebration of Christmas go back to pagan times, as, for instance, the giving of presents. Indeed, in 1644 the English Puritans forbade the keeping of Christmas by Act of Parliament, on the grounds that it was a heathen festival. At the Restoration Charles II revived the feast.

Though religion in Britain has been steadily losing ground Christmas is still the most widely celebrated festival in all its parts except Scotland. The reason for this is clear. With its numerous, often rather quaint social customs, it is undoubtedly the most colorful holiday of the year, and moreover one that has always even in the days when most people were practicing Christians, a time for eating, drinking and making merry.

Christmas eve

On Christmas Eve everything is rush and bustle. Offices and public buildings close at one o'clock, but the shops stay open late. Most big cities, especially London, are decorated with colored lights across the streets and enormous Christmas trees. The main line stations, trains and buses are crowded with people travelling from all parts of the country to be at home for Christmas.

In the homes there is a great air of expectation. The children are decorating the tree with tinsel, various baubles and often colored lights as well. The house is decorated with holly and a bunch of mistletoe under which the boys kiss the girls. Christmas cards – with the words *A Merry Christmas to You* or *Wishing You a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year*, or *With the Compliments of the Season*, etc. - are arranged on mantelpieces, shelves, tables, and sometimes attached to ribbon and hung round the walls.

Meanwhile the housewife is probably busy in the kitchen getting things ready for the next day's dinner. The Christmas bird, nowadays usually a turkey, is being prepared and stuffed, the pudding is inspected and the cake is got out of its tin and iced.

In small towns and villages one may still see carol-singers who come and stand in front of the house and sing or play Christmas carols.

Christmas Carols

Carol is originally a dance of many people in a circle accompanied by song; later more particularly applied to the song; then especially to such songs sung at Christmas, probably in medieval Nativity plays; now any song or hymn associated with the nativity story, sung at Christmas by singers traditionally grouped in a circle.

King's College Carols

Probably the most famous carol service in the world is that held annually on Christmas Eve, 24 December, in the magnificent Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, built by command of Henry VI in 1441. The service takes the form of Nine Lessons and Carols, each lesson being read by a different person. The music is the most glorious of its kind one may expect to hear. The service is heard by millions of people in many countries and has been broadcast annually since 1930. The public is admitted. The service begins at 3 p. m., but it is advisable to be at the Chapel by noon as crowds begin to queue for admittance then.

Christmas greenery

Bringing in greenery for the decoration of buildings at the midwinter festival is a custom of extreme antiquity. Long before the Christmas era began evergreens which flourish when everything else in nature is withered and dead were regarded as symbols of undying life, and used in magical rites to ensure the return of vegetation. Because these were heathen practices, the early Christian Church condemned them, and forbade the faithful to take any part in them. They were not to burn candles at midwinter as the pagans did nor yet to fix on their doorposts laurels destined soon to be burnt. But in time and under the innate conservatism of ordinary people these views gradually softened.

Best-loved of all now as in the past ivy, and mistletoe are holly. For our forefathers they were strong life-symbols, not only because they are evergreens, but also because unlike most plants they bear fruit in winter. The prickly holly with its bright red berries is traditionally masculine and therefore lucky to men, as the smooth variegated she-holly and the trailing ivy are to women.

All these plants can be and frequently are included in the Christmas decorations of churches with one exception. This is the mistletoe which by long tradition is never allowed inside a church at any time. Unlike other evergreens which also had their heathen significance once mistletoe has never quite lost its pagan and magical associations.

Kissing under the mistletoe seems to be an entirely English custom, only found in other countries when English settlers have carried it there. Its long-lived popularity may be partly due to the fact that, until at least as late as the early seventeenth century, the English were much given to kissing as a form of greeting. Various foreign visitors noted with surprise and pleasure how freely men and women kissed each other on meeting and parting, and how even strangers on their first introduction into a family were permitted and indeed expected to kiss the host's wife and daughters on the lips. "Wherever you go," wrote Erasmus in the sixteenth century, "everyone welcomes you with a kiss and the same on bidding farewell. You call again, when there is more kissing ... in short, turn where you will, there are kisses, kisses everywhere." Times have changed since then, and manners with them; but even today a girl who stands under mistletoe must expect to be kissed and by custom has no real right to refuse.

It is traditionally ill-omened to bring Christmas greenery into the house before December 24th, or to leave it hanging after the festival season has ended. Nowadays the former belief seems to have faded in most places, and it is quite usual for decorations to appear a week or ten days in advance.

Christmas Day (25th December)

On Christmas Day one is wakened in the morning by one's children excitedly opening their stockings – these stockings, or more usually one of father's socks – it's bigger have been hung over the end of the bed with great ceremony and expectation on Christmas Eve. Farther Christmas will come down the chimney having parked his reindeer on the roof and fill them. You should also leave a carrot on the mantelpiece for the reindeer. In post-war Britain this is all rather difficult as few bedrooms have chimneys; however, children manage all the same. How early they discover that Father Christmas is really Dad is questionable, but this is one secret they usually keep from their parents. By the age of eleven they usually give up.

More people go to Church on Christmas Day than at any other time. The services vary from denomination to denomination but usually include favorite hymns such as "Hark the herald angels sing" and "O come all ye faithful".

On returning from Church – or after a late breakfast – mother disappears into the kitchen to put the turkey in the oven, which has been prepared the day before, and the pudding on to boil, while the family gather round the Tree. This

has been decorated previously with tinsel and various baubles and usually has colored lights. The Tree is usually in a window and at night one can walk down streets and see these lights twinkling in the windows. When mother is ready, the great moment comes – the opening of the presents. Everyone has tried to keep their gifts a secret and if you know what you're getting you must show delight and gratitude – even for the sixth tie or the twentieth bar of soap! The parcels have been tied on the Tree or laid round it and each takes a turn at opening one. Everyone gets something – the dog a new collar – the cat a tin of sardines.

The time when presents are opened varies. In many cases this is done as soon as breakfast is over or even before it if there are children in the family.

After the excitement has died down you have the long wait for the food. Some people go for walks to strengthen their appetite either taking the children with them or leaving them at home. Meanwhile the women of the family are busy with the food. The men may either stay at home or go to the pub for a Christmas drink with their friends.

The meal is really traditional – stuffed turkey, bread sauce, boiled ham, mashed potatoes and Brussels sprouts to be followed by plum pudding, mince pies (perhaps jelly for the children), brandy butter and either tea or coffee.

After all that when the washing up is done and father usually helps one sits down and digests and watches television. Later one has tea – that is tea and Christmas cake, and friends might be invited lit not usually to the dinner.

The evening is spent perhaps with a drink or reading or watching television or just talking, but the whole theme is essentially one of the family, with the children taking the most important part. People travel from all parts of the country to be at home for Christmas.

Nowadays many childless middle-class couples spend Christmas at some country inn, catering for such occasions. This type of Christmas holiday is not cheap, but it relieves the working wife of the household duties usual for this time of the year.

Christmas gifts

The giving of presents at Christmas-time has a long pre-Christian ancestry. Before Christianity was known in the world, gifts of various kinds used to be exchanged at some of the pagan religious festivals of midwinter.

Children in the British Isles and the United States and elsewhere in the English-speaking world look to Father Christmas (or Santa Klaus) for their gifts on Christmas Eve. Or at least they still do so in the early years of their lives until the multiplication of "Father Christmas" in shops or the detection of some adult in disguise begins to sow doubt in their young minds. In England Father Christmas was certainly known as far back as the fifteenth century, for he is named in a carol of that period beginning "Hail, Father Christmas, hail to thee!" In the modern version of his legend Father Christmas has become a very old but never-ageing man, dressed in red robes and furs who comes from the Far North in a sleigh drawn by reindeer and deposits his gifts by night in the houses, unseen and unheard.

Christmas box

A gratuity given on Boxing Day (the day after Christmas Day). Boxes placed in churches for casual offerings used to be opened on Christmas Day, and the contents called the "dole of the Christmas box" or the "box money" were distributed next day by the priests. Apprentices also used to carry a box round to their masters' customers for small gratuities. Postmen received such gifts until after World War II and some dustmen and errand-boys still call to collect them.

Christmas cards

Christmas cards are now so essential a part of the Christmas festivities that they can hardly be omitted from any list of established customs. Nevertheless they are little more than a hundred years old and were unknown before Victorian times. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it was a pleasant, though by no means universal, custom to send complimentary verses, often of the sender's own composition, to particular friends at Christmas or on other great occasions. For this purpose, specially prepared sheets of paper with engraved headings and ornamental borders were frequently used. Similar, but less elaborate sheets were used by schoolboys for the "Christmas pieces" given to their parents at the end of the winter term. These consisted of two or three sentences, very carefully written, which served both as a greeting and as a proof of progress in the art of writing, the latter, no doubt, being the more important from the schoolmaster's point of view. Ornamental stationery for these two purposes was sold in considerable quantities in the first

half of last century, and from it the true Christmas card with its printed message and pictorial decoration, seems to have developed.

More than one person has claimed the honor of inventing the new form of greeting or has had it claimed for him in later years. Probably the strongest claim to be the inventor is that of J. C. Horsley. In 1846, a pictorial card designed by him in 1843 at the suggestion of Sir Henry Cole, was published by Sumner's Home Treasury Office, and about a thousand copies were sold.

This was the small beginning of a fashion which has never since looked back. By about 1870 the Christmas card had become really popular in England, and a few years later it reached the United States. As for the designs these have naturally varied considerably in the course of a century, ranging from simple sprigs of holly and mistletoe and homely family scenes to really fine work by established artists. In our own time the search for novelty has sometimes resulted in the appearance of pictures that are quite irrelevant to Christmas, and some that seem completely unsuitable for the feast of peace and loving kindness. But one familiar figure has remained constant from the beginning until now – the robin who still appears on countless cards every year.

The Christmas robin

But why the robin? The origin of the robin as a Christmas bird dates back not more than 100 years and is rather mundane. It is all the fault of the Post Office.

In the middle of the last century the Post Office dressed its postmen in bright red coats of a color to match the official red of the pillar boxes. Because of this striking uniform the postmen themselves came to be known colloquially as “redbreasts”, and there are references in the novels of Anthony Trollope (who was himself a postal official) to “robin postmen”.

So it was inevitable, when the Christmas card first came into general favor around 1860, that robins should figure prominently in its decoration. Almost all the early cards showed a cheerful robin redbreast, often bringing the welcome Christmas mail in its beak or sometimes actually knocking on the door just like the postman himself.

The scarlet-clad postmen are now forgotten, and their present-day successors wear a sober bluish-grey but they still carry vast loads of robin-adorned cards each festive season.

Christmas tree

The Christmas Tree that now spreads its lighted and decorated branches every year in so many different countries came originally from Germany. How long it has been known there is uncertain. The first definite mention of it dates only from the early seventeenth century, but it is probable that it existed in some form or another well before that time. The early trees apparently had no candles; but from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, candles are frequently mentioned, and it is hard to believe that so lovely an adornment could ever have been omitted once it had been introduced. The first English example of a Christmas Tree of which we have a precise record was one arranged by a German member of Queen Caroline's household for a children's party in 1821. This, although the giver called it a tree, was actually a branch of evergreen fixed on a board decorated with gilt oranges and almonds, and having a model farm, complete with animals, round its base.

In 1841 Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had a lighted tree, the first of many, at Windsor Castle. The event was widely reported, naturally. In the next few years, accounts and pictures of successive royal trees in the Castle appeared in newspapers and journals, and doubtless helped to make the custom better known. The royal trees at Windsor made the Christmas Tree fashionable; and if for a few years still ordinary people tended to think of it as a foreign importation – “the new German toy”, as Dickens called it in 1850 – by the late sixties it was already a familiar sight in most parts of the country, and was slowly but surely replacing the older, native Kissing-Bough.

This was a garland of greenery which hung from the middle of the ceiling in the main living-room. It was shaped like a double-hooped May-garland, or like a crown, and it was adorned with candles, red apples, rosettes of colored paper and ornaments of various kinds. The most important item was a bunch of mistletoe suspended from the centre. In some districts, where the plant was scarce, the bunch was omitted, and the Bough itself was called “the mistletoe”. The candles were ceremonially lit on Christmas Eve and every night thereafter during the Twelve Days of Christmas. Throughout the festival, the Kissing-Bough was the glowing centre of the family rejoicings, under which carols were sung, games were played, and kisses were exchanged in the mistletoe's shadow. These lovely garlands are still to be seen in some English homes, either as an ornamental accompaniment to the Christmas Tree or instead of it. They are however fairly rare now and in the

majority of households the Teutonic tree has gained so firm a hold that its native predecessors have been almost entirely forgotten.

In recent times the Christmas Tree has spread outwards from the home into the churches and the streets. Tall fir trees, ablaze with lights that are now usually electric, can be seen in churches of many different denominations, standing in the nave or at the west end, and sometimes outside in the churchyard. Anonymous gifts are often piled up round them for the inmates of hospitals and orphanages. Many towns also have a communal tree, round which carol-services are often held, in some square or park or outside the Town Hall. Many English towns now have these communal trees, the most famous being that which, since 1947, the citizens of Oslo regularly give to the citizens of London. Immensely tall and brilliantly illuminated it stands every year in Trafalgar Square close to Nelson's monument. A charming allied custom that is becoming increasingly common is the setting up of small decorated and lighted trees in the gardens of roadside houses, where they can be seen and their beauty shared by all who pass by,

A giant Christmas tree

In Trafalgar Square, in front of the National Gallery an enormous Christmas Tree stands. It is a gift from the people of Oslo. Every winter they cut down a tree for London. Then horses pull it through the snowy forest to the docks. When the tree arrives police on motor cycles escort it to Trafalgar Square.

It is over fifty feet high. There it stands as straight as the pillars behind it and it looks taller than the dome of the National Gallery.

It is brightly decorated. Right at the top is a large shining star. The branches are draped with tinsel and hung with big, brilliant stars that sparkle in the light.

Bright, shining balls of different colors and different sizes cover the Tree from top to bottom. Imitation snow lies soft and silvery white on the dark green branches.

No wonder whole families – boys and girls, and grownups too – stand and stare. Here is a Christmas Tree bigger than any they have ever seen in their lives.

Under a darkening sky in the heart of London this sparkling tree seems to catch the spirit of Christmas.

Boxing day

This is the day when one visits friends, goes for a drive or a long walk or just sits around recovering from too much food – everything to eat is cold. In the country there are usually Boxing Day Meets.

In the big cities and towns, tradition on that day demands a visit to the pantomime, where once again one is entertained by the story of Cinderella, Dick Whittington, Puss in Boots or whoever it may be – the story being protracted and elaborated into as many spectacular scenes as the producer thinks one can take at a sitting.

Christmas mummers

For over a thousand years, mummers have made their appearance at Christmas time. Dressed in weird costume, sometimes disguised as animals or with blackened faces, they toured the village enacting crude plays often linked with pagan rites or with the triumph of good over evil. Down the ages the characters have changed according to events in history, but the theme itself has changed little.

The play performed by the Andover (Hants) mummers on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day is believed to be over eight hundred years old. The mummers tour the town, calling at inns and hotels, where they are expectantly awaited. They are dressed in costumes of paper streamers and are completely disguised. The chief characters are usually St. George and a Turkish Knight. The Knight is always slain - and always miraculously revived by the Doctor.

An 800-year-old play is also performed by a troupe of mummers at Marshfield, in Gloucestershire. They wear elaborate costumes. Several performances are given on Boxing Day.

Another famous performance of mummers can still be seen at Llangynwyd, near Bridgend, Glamorgan. The Mari Lwyd ceremonies may be a survival of medieval religious plays, for the name means "Holy Mary". The chief mummer wears the skeleton of a horse's head, bedecked with colored ribbons streamers.

Some mummers have an almost frightening appearance. They have long colored streamers on their clothes and have head-dresses towering up to 8 ft high. Although St. George, a Knight and Dr. Quack are characters in the majority of plays, many curiously named characters appear in different districts. In Lincolnshire, for example, there are

characters named Wild Worm, Pickle Herring, Ginger Breeches and Allspice!

The Christmas pantomime

A pantomime is a traditional English entertainment at Christmas. It is meant for children, but adults enjoy it just as much. It is a very old form of entertainment and can be traced back to 16th century Italian comedies. Harlequin is a character from these old comedies.

There have been a lot of changes over the years. Singing and dancing and all kinds of jokes have been added; but the stories which are told are still fairy-tales, with a hero, a heroine, and a villain. Because they are fairy-tales we do not have to ask who will win in the end! The hero always wins the beautiful princess, the fairy queen is triumphant and the demon king is defeated.

In every pantomime there are always three main characters. These are the “principal boy”, the “principal girl”, and the “dame”. The principal boy is the hero and he is always played by a girl. The principal girl is the heroine who always marries the principal boy in the end. The dame is a comic figure usually the mother of the principal boy or girl and is always played by a man.

In addition you can be sure there will always be a “good fairy” and a “bad fairy” – perhaps an ogre or a demon king.

Pantomimes are changing all the time. Every year someone has a new idea to make them more exciting or more up-to-date. There are pantomimes on ice, with all the actors skating; pantomimes with a well-known pop singer as the principal boy or girl; or pantomimes with a famous comedian from the English theatre as the dame. But the old stories remain side by side with the new ideas.

РЕКОМЕНДАЦИИ ДЛЯ РАЗРАБОТКИ ПРОЕКТОВ

Проектное обучение представляет собой технологию активной познавательной деятельности студентов, в основе которой лежит разработка в ходе самостоятельной (групповой или индивидуальной) исследовательской деятельности различных типов проектов – перспективных заданий, направленных на решение задач.

Участники проектной деятельности должны ответить на вопросы: Что является целью проектной деятельности? В чем актуальность (оригинальность, ценность) идеи проекта? На решение каких задач он будет направлен? Каков будет результат (продукт)? Где он может быть применен? Как он может изменить ситуацию?

Типы проектов в вузе:

- *исследовательские* проекты, подчиненные логике исследования и имеющие структуру, приближенную или полностью совпадающую с научным исследованием;

- *информационные* проекты (модуль исследовательского), направленные на поиск, знакомство и представление информации;

- *практико-ориентированные* проекты, имеющие профессиональную направленность, результат которых ориентирован на социальные интересы самих студентов.

Процесс работы над проектом многоступенчатый. В табл. 1 представлены этапы и содержание проектной деятельности.

Таблица 1

Этапы работы над проектом	Содержание работы	Деятельность студентов
<i>Подготовка</i>	Определение реальной ситуации, ее осмысление, рождение задачи (проблемы) из описания ситуации, постановка вопросов	Анализируют ситуацию, выявляют проблему, рассматривают актуальность ее решения
<i>Прогнозирование и целеполагание</i>	Прогноз изменения ситуации, постановка личных и коллективных целей, их осознание	Обсуждают. Прогнозируют. Определяют цели

<i>Планирование</i>	<p>Определение источников, способов сбора и анализа информации, форм представления результатов.</p> <p>Установление критериев оценки процесса и результатов.</p> <p>Распределение задач между членами групп</p>	<p>Разрабатывают план действий. Определяют и распределяют задачи.</p> <p>Вырабатывают критерии оценки результатов</p>
<i>Реализация</i>	<p>Сбор информации. Работа над проектом. Решение промежуточных задач.</p> <p>Получение запланированных результатов</p>	<p>Выполняют свою часть проекта. Промежуточное обсуждение хода реализации проекта</p>
<i>Оформление и представление</i>	<p>Формы представления устного и письменного отчета. Оппонирование</p>	<p>Отчитываются, обсуждают, представляют результаты для внедрения в практику</p>
<i>Мониторинг и рефлексия</i>	<p>Интерпретация и анализ процесса и результата.</p> <p>Внешняя оценка.</p> <p>Рефлексия студентов по поводу авторства в проекте. Формулирование выводов. Новое целеполагание</p>	<p>Анализируют, интерпретируют, оценивают в ходе коллективного обсуждения и самооценок</p>

Параметры внешней оценки проекта:

- значимость и актуальность проблемы;
- корректность используемых методов исследования и обработки полученных результатов;
- активность каждого члена проектной группы в соответствии с его индивидуальными возможностями;
- характер принимаемых решений, общения, взаимопомощи;
- глубина проникновения в проблему, привлечение знаний из других областей;
- эстетика оформления результатов проекта;
- умение аргументировать, доказывать, делать выводы и заключения, отвечать на вопросы.

TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES IN LONDON

London has preserved its old ceremonies and traditions to a greater extent than any other city in England. Most of these traditions have been kept up without interruption since the thirteenth century.

Foreigners coming to London are impressed by quite a number of ceremonies which seem to be incompatible with the modern traffic and technical conditions of a highly developed country.

However, it is beyond the scope of this book to deal with all the ritual surrounding the British capital. We have, therefore, limited ourselves to a description of those traditional ceremonies which are widely known both in Great Britain and abroad.

Changing the guard

One of the most impressive and popular displays of royal pageantry is Changing the Guard which takes place at Buckingham Palace every day, including Sunday, at 11.30.

The troops who take part are selected from the five regiments of Foot Guards. Their numbers are dependent on whether the Queen is in residence or not. These form the famous Brigade of Guards, and they consist of the Grenadiers, the Cold stream Guards, and the Welsh, Irish and Scots Guards.

The men of the duty guard march from either Wellington or Chelsea Barracks to Buckingham Palace with a band which during the actual ceremony plays in the forecourt of the Palace.

The guard to be relieved forms at the southern end of the forecourt under the command of the Captain of the Queen's Guard. They are drawn up into two ranks. Before they are stood at ease, the color is paraded by the ensign on duty. Each regiment has two colors – a royal one and a regimental one. The royal color can be seen only when the Queen is at home. Sometimes the color is decorated with a laurel wreath, signifying the anniversary of a battle in which the regiment was engaged.

The new guard enters the forecourt by the north gate. As it approaches, the old guard is called to attention. The new guard is then halted to be formed into files before it advances to position at a slow march. While this is taking place the band plays. Later the band leads the old guard back to their barracks.

Now a word about the colourful uniforms of the Foot Guards. On ceremonial duty these are scarlet tunics, blue trousers and bearskin caps. Apart from the Scots Guards the regiments have distinctive plumes. It is easy to identify the different regiments by looking closely at the spacing of their tunic buttons. The oldest regiment, the Grenadier Guards, have singly-spaced buttons; the Coldstream Guards are in groups of two; the Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards in groups of three, four and five respectively.

The history of the Foot Guards goes back to 1656, when Charles II of England, during his exile in Holland, recruited a small body-guard, which was merged in the regiment of guards enrolled at the Restoration in 1660. On St. Valentine's Day, 1661, on Tower Hill, what had been the Lord General's Regiment of Foot Guards, formed by Oliver Cromwell in 1650, took up its arms as an "extraordinary guard" for the Sovereign. Having marched from Coldstream, near Berwick-upon-Tweed, it acquired the title of the Coldstream Guards. Its motto of "nulli secundus" sufficiently denotes its denial of precedence to the first Guard. The latter acquired their title of Grenadier Guards and their bearskin headdress- later adopted by the rest of the Guards brigade – by virtue of their defeat of Napoleon's grenadier guards at Waterloo.

In 1661 the Scots Fusilier Guards became known for the first time as the Scots Guards. In 1707 they were put on the same footing as the other two Guards regiments.

In 1900 Queen Victoria, pleased with the fighting quality of the Irish regiments in the South African War, commanded the formation of the Irish Guards. In 1915 the representational nature of the brigade was rounded off by the formation of the Guards.

The Brigade of Guards serves as a personal body-guard to the Sovereign.

When the Queen is in residence at Buckingham Palace, there is a guard of four sentries. Only two are on duty when she is away from London.

When the Queen is in residence at Windsor Castle, another Changing the Guard ceremony takes place in the Quadrangle there at 10 a. m. daily.

Mounting the guard

The colourful spectacle of Mounting the Guard at the Horse Guards in Whitehall, always attracts London sightseers.

It can be seen at 11 a. m. every weekday and at 10 a. m. on Sundays.

The guard is provided by a detachment of the Household Cavalry and involves units of the Royal Horse Guards, known as the "Blues", and the Life Guards, sometimes referred to as "The Tins".

The Life Guards wear scarlet uniforms and white metal helmets with white horsehair plumes and have white sheepskin saddles. The Royal Horse Guards wear deep-blue tunics and white metal helmets with red horsehair plumes and have black sheepskin saddles.

The actual ceremony is dependent on whether or not the Queen is in residence in London. If she is, there is more to see. On these occasions the ceremony is performed by what has become known as the "long guard". The guard is commanded by an officer in charge of sixteen troopers, a corporal of horse, a corporal major, and a trumpeter. The trumpeter rides a grey horse; the others ride black chargers. A standard is carried, except when the Queen is not in London, when, also, there is no officer in command.

First the old guard is dismissed. It is drawn up in the forecourt, which faces Whitehall. With the arrival of the new guard, the trumpeter sounds a call. The two officers salute and then stand their horses side by side while the guard is changed. The ceremony lasts for just over fifteen minutes, and ends with the old guard returning to its barracks.

The ceremony of the keys

Every night at 9.53 p. m. the Chief Warder of the Yeomen Warders (Beefeaters) of the Tower of London lights a candle lantern and then makes his way towards the Bloody Tower. In the Archway his Escort awaits his arrival. The Chief Warder, carrying the keys, then moves off with his Escort to the West Gate, which he locks, while the Escort "presents arms". Then the Middle and Byward Towers are locked.

The party then returns to the Bloody Tower Archway, and there they are halted by the challenge of the sentry. "Halt!" he commands. "Who goes there?" The Chief Warder answers, "The keys." The sentry demands, "Whose keys?" "Queen Elizabeth's keys," replies the Chief Warder. "Advance, Queen Elizabeth's keys; all's well," commands the sentry.

Having received permission to proceed through the Archway, the party then form up facing the Main Guard of the Tower. The order is given by the officer-in-charge to "Present Arms". The Chief Warder doffs his Tudor-style bonnet and cries, "God preserve Queen Elizabeth." "Amen," answer the Guard and Escort.

At 10 p. m. the bugler sounds the "Last Post". The Chief Warder proceeds to the Queen's House, where the keys are given into the custody of the Resident Governor and Major.

The Ceremony of the Keys dates back 700 years and has taken place every night during that period, even during the blitz of London in the last war. On one particular night, April 16, 1941, bomb blast disrupted the ceremony, knocking out members of the Escort and Yeomen Warders. Despite this the duty was completed.

Only a limited number of visitors are admitted to the ceremony each night. Application to see it must be made at least forty-eight hours in advance at the Constable's office in the Tower. Visitors with permission are admitted at 9.40 p. m. and leave at 10 p. m.

Trooping the colour

During the month of June, a day is set aside as the Queen's official birthday. This is usually the second Saturday in June. On this day there takes place on Horse Guards' Parade in Whitehall the magnificent spectacle of Trooping the Color, which begins at about 11.15a.m. (unless rain

intervenes, when the ceremony is usually postponed until conditions are suitable).

This is pageantry of rare splendor with the Queen riding side-saddle on a highly trained horse.

The colors of one of the five regiments of Foot Guards are trooped before the Sovereign. As she rides on to Horse Guards' Parade the massed array of the Brigade of Guards, dressed in ceremonial uniforms, await her inspection.

For twenty minutes the whole parade stands rigidly to attention while being inspected by the Queen. Then the Trooping ceremony comes followed by the famous March Past of the Guards to the music of massed bands, at which the Queen takes the Salute. The precision drill of the regiments is notable.

The ceremony ends with the Queen returning to Buckingham Palace at the head of her Guards.

The Escort to the Color chosen normally in strict rotation then mounts guard at the Palace.

Electing London's lord mayor

One of the most important functions of the City's eighty-four Livery Companies is the election of London's Lord Mayor at the Guildhall at 12 noon on Michaelmas Day (September 29th). The public are admitted to the ceremony. It provides one of the many impressive and colorful spectacles for which London is famed. The reigning Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, carrying posies, walk in procession to the Guildhall and take their places on the dais, which is strewn with sweet-smelling herbs. The Recorder announces that the representatives of the Livery Companies have been called together to select two Aldermen for the office of Lord Mayor of London. From the selected two, the Court of Aldermen will choose one. The Mayor, Aldermen and other senior officials then withdraw, and the Livery select their two nominations. Usually the choice is unanimous, and the Liverymen all hold up their hands and shout "All". The Sergeant-at-Arms takes the mace from the table and, accompanied by the Sheriffs, takes the two names to the Court of Aldermen, who then proceed to select the Mayor Elect. The bells of the City ring out as the Mayor and the Mayor Elect leave the Guildhall in the state coach for the Mansion House.

The Lord Mayor's Show

The splendid civic event known as the Lord Mayor's Show is watched by many thousands of people, who throng the streets of the City of London on the second Saturday of November to see its interesting procession and admire its glittering pageantry.

Its origin dates back more than six hundred years.

The Lord Mayor Elect having previously made his declaration of office (in the Guildhall the day before), is driven in state to the Royal Courts of Justice, where he takes the oath before the Lord Chief Justice and Judges of the Queen's Bench to perform his duties faithfully.

This final declaration was formerly made before the Barons of the Exchequer and originated in 1230 during the reign of Henry III.

Setting out from the Guildhall at about 11.30 a. m., the newly-elected Lord Mayor travels in a gilded coach which dates from the mid-eighteenth century.

Forming his body-guard is the company of Pikemen and Musketeers. The long, colorful procession, made up of liveried footmen and coachmen and decorated floats presenting tableaux linked with the theme chosen for the Show, winds its way by a devious route to the Law Courts, arriving there about noon.

After the oath has been taken the entire procession returns by way of the Embankment to the original point of departure.

During the evening there takes place at Guildhall the traditional Banquet according to a custom going back two hundred and fifty years. This is a glittering occasion. The Banquet is attended by many of the most prominent people in the country, and is usually televised – at least in part. The Prime Minister delivers a major political speech, and the toast of the hosts on behalf of the guests is proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The cost of the Show and Banquet is met by the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs, and one can imagine how high it is. In the late 1600s the cost of the Banquet is reputed to have amounted to nearly £ 700. It is interesting to note that the Lord Mayor today receives £ 15,000 from the City's cash for his term in office. From this amount all his expenses must be met.

The State Opening of Parliament

Undoubtedly one of the most colorful and spectacular pageants that take place in London is that which surrounds the State Opening of

Parliament. This occurs after a General Election and preceding the beginning of each parliamentary session, generally during the month of November at around midday.

Her Majesty the Queen, as the reigning monarch, travels in the resplendent Irish State Coach from her residence at Buckingham palace to the palace of Westminster where she delivers her speech from the Throne of the House of Lords amid ritual dating from Plantagenet times.

Her arrival at Victoria Tower is greeted by a salute fired by the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, wearing full-dress uniform. The title "King's Troop" survives today because Her Majesty signified to Field Marshal Viscount Alanbrooke on 21 February, 1952, her wish for the King's Troop to retain this title throughout her reign. It was her father, the late King George VI, who in 1947 granted the title. When Elizabeth succeeded him on the Throne she wished to pay this tribute to her father's great interest in the King's Troop.

At the ancient Palace of Westminster Her Majesty is received by the Great Officers of State – the two hereditary officers, the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain, and three non-hereditary Great Officers, the Lord High Chancellor, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Lord President of the Council.

Accompanying Her Majesty members of the Royal Family and Household such as the private Secretary, the Master of the Horse and the Keeper of the Privy Purse.

The Queen then enters the Robing Room, later to emerge wearing her royal robes and crown. Meanwhile the Great Officers of State, the Heralds, and others, all magnificently appareled, take up their positions in the Royal Gallery.

The House, rich in color with the splendid robes and costumes worn by peers, judges, bishops, ambassadors and peeresses, now await the appearance of Her Majesty.

As she emerges from the Robing Room, the hush is broken by the sound of trumpets as the Garter King of Arms signals to the Heralds, by the raising of his scepter, the approach of the Queen's procession into the House of Lords.

The Queen then moves slowly towards the steps she will ascend to the Throne. Seated upon it, she commands Black Rod (one of the five officers of

the Order of the Garter) to summon the Speaker and Members of the House of Commons.

The Lord Chancellor, kneeling before her, then hands her the Gracious Speech, which contains the Government's program of legislation for the new session.

After the Speech, the procession moves slowly out of the chamber.

The tradition of this most glittering State Opening is said to have changed very little since the earliest one ever recorded, 1523, though there are records which go as far back as 1242 pertaining to the Speech from the Throne.

ARTS FESTIVALS IN BRITAIN

Some 650 professional arts festivals take place in Britain each year. The Edinburgh International Festival, featuring a wide range of arts, is the largest of its kind in the world. Other annual festivals held in Edinburgh include International Folk and Jazz Festivals and the Film and Television Festival. The Mayfest, the second largest festival in Britain, takes place in Glasgow. Some well-known festivals concentrating on music are the Three Choirs Festival which has taken place for more than 260 years in Gloucester, Worcester or Hereford; the Cheltenham Festival, largely devoted to contemporary British music; and the Aldeburgh Festival. Among others catering for a number of art forms are the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales, the National Gaelic Mod in Scotland, the Belfast Festival at Queen's, and the festivals in Brighton, Chichester, Harrogate, Llangollen, Malvern, Pitlochry, Salisbury, and York. Many much smaller towns also hold arts festivals. A major event in London is the Netting Hill Carnival, in which the Afro-Caribbean community plays a prominent part; over one million people visited the Carnival in 1993.

Festival calendar (short-list)

This calendar contains some of the festivals mentioned above and a number of less well-known ones sufficiently important to be listed.

Post-war years have witnessed a significant increase in the number of professional arts festivals in Britain, and today about 650 festivals take place each year. Not enough has been done to involve the general public in these activities. Some of the festivals, however, are widely popular, and it is mainly with these that the book deals. A number of other arts festivals, less well-

known, but sufficiently important to be mentioned, are also included in the list below.

Burns Night. Scotland (25 January).

Pitlochry Drama Festival. Pitlochry, Perthshire, Scotland (April and October).

Season of Shakespeare Plays. Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire (all year round).

The Glyndebourne Festival. Sussex (May-August).

Aldeburgh Festival. Aldeburgh, Suffolk (June).

The Bath Festival. Bath, Somerset (June).

York Mystery Plays and Festival of the Arts. York (June and July).

Chichester Theatre Festival Season. Sussex (July - Sept.).

Henry Wood Promenade Concerts ("The Proms"). Royal Albert Hall, London (July - Sept.).

Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales (August). Site varies from year to year.

Edinburgh International Festival (end of the summer).

The Three Choirs Festival (Sept.). Held in turn at the Cathedrals of Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford.

Commonwealth Arts Festival (end of Oct.). London.

Burns night

There are hundreds of Burns Clubs scattered throughout the world, and on 25th January they all Endeavour to hold Burns Night celebrations to mark the birth of Scotland's greatest poet. The first club was founded at Greenock, Renfrewshire, in 1802. The traditional menu at the suppers is cock-a-leekie soup (chicken broth), boiled salt herring, haggis with turnips, and champit tatties (mashed potatoes). The arrival of the haggis is usually heralded by the music of bagpipes. "The Immortal Memory" is toasted, and the company stand in silent remembrance. Then follows dancing, pipe music, and selections from Burns's lyrics, the celebration concluding with the poet's famous Auld Lang Syne.

The London arts season

"Get a bit of culture" is a London expression, said in a mock-cockney accent for humor. The British, though passionate about art, don't take it too

seriously. So your bit of culture, serious and fun, is what the London Arts Season offers throughout February and March – a festival which includes six new musical productions, eight operas, three ballets, an important Cezanne retrospective at the Tate Gallery, a series of celebrity recitals and a celebration of 100 years of cinema.

The Shakespeare birthday celebrations

Every year the anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare is celebrated with joyous ceremony at Stratford-upon-Avon, the Warwickshire market-town where he was born on 23 April, 1564. Flags are unfurled in the main street, people buy sprigs of rosemary (“for remembrance”) to wear in their buttonholes, the Town Beadle heads a long procession through the streets to the parish church where everyone in the procession deposits a wreath or a bouquet (or a simple rose) at the poet's grave, and in the evening there is a performance of the chosen “Birthday Play” in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. In spite of the attendance of distinguished representatives from all parts of the world, the Birthday celebrations seem essentially local, even parochial; they are the tribute of his fellow townfolk to an honored citizen who notwithstanding the fame and fortune he won in the course of his career in London could think of no better place in which to spend his last years than the small country town in which he was born. He might have had a resplendent tomb in some great cathedral; instead, he was well satisfied with the prospect of a simple grave in the same church in which he was baptized. So, when his birthday comes round each year, the good townspeople may well be excused for thinking of William Shakespeare, first and foremost, as a son of Stratford.

But Stratford, of course, was the focal point of the celebrations, and those who know the town could hardly recognize the familiar view across the river from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. For on the meadows on the opposite bank of the Avon a great pavilion, a hundred yards long and a hundred feet wide, housed the most remarkable Shakespeare Exhibition ever devised, illustrating Shakespeare's life and career against the contemporary background of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Painters and sculptors, stage and television designers, re-created scenes of life in town and country, in palace and university, and in “the great Globe itself”. The exhibits included the Quartos and Folios of Shakespeare's plays, first editions of his poems and copies of the books which he read and which

inspired him. There was a “Long Gallery” (a feature of many of the great mansions of the period), with portraits of the famous personalities of Shakespeare's time, and the voices of eminent living actors could be heard in well-known passages from his plays. There was a detailed model of the Globe Theatre in London, where many of the plays were first performed, and the music of Shakespeare's time could be heard, including the original settings for some of the songs in the plays.

The Exhibition opened at Stratford on 23 April and remained on the banks of the Avon until 5 August. It was later re-assembled under the roof of the Waverley Market at Edinburgh, where it was open from 18 August (the first day of the Edinburgh International Festival) until 5 October. Three weeks later, on 26 October, it was re-opened in London, and remained there until the early part of next year. In London, as in Stratford, it occupied a riverside site – the open space on the south bank of the Thames which had been reserved for the building of the National Theatre.

The Welsh Eisteddfod

Welsh literature is one of the oldest and richest in Europe. The Welsh people also have strong musical traditions; the country is well known for its choral singing. Special festivals, known as eisteddfodau, encourage Welsh literature and music. The largest is the annual Royal National Eisteddfod, consisting of competitions in music, singing, prose and poetry entirely in Welsh. Artists from all over the world come to the town of Llangollen for the annual International Musical Eisteddfod.

No country in the world has a greater love of music and poetry than the people of Wales. Today Eisteddfod is held at scores of places throughout Wales particularly from May to early November. The habit of holding similar events dates back to early history, and there are records of competitions for Welsh poets and musicians in the twelfth century. The Eisteddfod sprang from the Gorsedd, or National Assembly of Bards. It was held occasionally up to 1819, but since then has become an annual event for the encouragement of Welsh literature and music and the preservation of the Welsh language and ancient national customs.

The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales is held annually early in August, in North and South Wales alternately, its actual venue varying from year to year. It attracts Welsh people from all over the world. The program includes male and mixed choirs, brass-band concerts, many children's

events, drama, arts and crafts and, of course, the ceremony of the Crowning of the Bard.

Edinburgh International Festival

The post-war years have seen a great growth in the number of arts festivals in Britain and other European countries. Among them the Edinburgh International Festival has now firmly established its reputation as one of the foremost events of its kind in the world. This is not surprising because everything in the arts, if it is first-class, is potentially an Edinburgh Festival attraction. On most evenings during the festival there are as many as six events to choose from on the official program: symphony concerts, ballets, plays, recitals – all given by the finest artistes in the world.

The idea of the festival originated in the first post-war year. All over Europe rationing and restrictions were the order of the day, and hundreds of towns lay in ruins. It is in this setting that the festival was planned. Its founders had many difficulties to face, not the least of them being the fact that this was something Edinburgh and indeed Scotland had never previously known.

The Festival was inaugurated in 1947. Glyndebourne Opera, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Old Vic Theatre and Sadler's Wells Ballet were only a few of the participants of this first venture. The Festival was a success, and has been held annually ever since.

The festival is quite international in its character giving as a rule a varied representation of artistic production from a number of countries, and beginning with the 1960s it has had a definite theme, that is the work of one or two composers was studied in depth. In 1961, for instance, it gave a comprehensive view of Arnold Schoenberg whereas 1962 saw a similar treatment given to the music of the famous Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovitch. A great number of his works ranging from symphonies and operatic excerpts to string quartets, songs and piano pieces were included in the program.

Festival programs are published as early as March, and the booking opens soon afterwards, at the beginning of April. The Festival Society which takes care of all these matters not only arranges for the visitors' tickets but also reserves accommodation.

An attraction for those visitors who enjoy a colorful if rather noisy spectacle is the Military Tattoo which has become a regular feature of the

Edinburgh Festival. It is staged on the Esplanade against the background of a floodlit castle. This pompous military display strikes, however, a discordant note in the framework of a festival devoted entirely to arts.

Harvest Festival

“We plough the fields and scatter
The good seed on the land ...”

With this hymn the harvest festival service opens in churches all over England at the beginning of October. Many schools too hold a special harvest service. The pupils bring fruit and vegetables from their gardens. They polish the apples and pears and make them shine; they polish the long, dark green marrows and scrub the potatoes. Then they arrange them in piles on the platform in the school hall. They bring autumn flowers, too - yellow and orange chrysanthemums – and nuts from the woods and hedges.

After the service, the older pupils put all the harvest gifts into boxes and baskets and take them to hospitals and old people's homes.

AMERICAN NATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND TRADITIONS NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

Although the United States is young compared to other countries, its culture and traditions are rich because of the contributions made by many groups of people who have come to its shores over the past three centuries. Hundreds of regional holidays have originated from the geography, climate and history of the different parts of the country. Each state holds its own annual fair with local themes and music; and some celebrate the day on which they joined the union and became a state.

In Pennsylvania towns people celebrate the fall foliage by demonstrating ways of cooking that have been handed down to them by their ancestors. Spring festivals are common here with costumed theatrical performances and parades.

African Americans observe Kwanzaa, a holiday based on the African celebration of the first harvest of the year. Founded upon the seven principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith, Kwanzaa encourages African Americans to think about their African roots in addition to their present-day life in America. African Americans exchange gifts as rewards for

their achievements; and they light seven candles to remind them of the principles which unite them.

Winters are long in many Midwestern states, so winter festivals have become social events. Winter Carnival in Minnesota offers exhibitions in skating, skiing, ice fishing and even snowmobile races. In Michigan a winter festival, called Tip-Up-Town, offers a contest for the best sculpture carved in ice.

In Houston Texans come to the Astrodome to see cowboys ride horses and rope cattle during the Livestock show and Rodeo. Visitors watch the Hopi Indians carry on their strong tradition of rain dancing, a combination of dancing and prayer to ask for rain in a hot dry August.

Hawaii is warm the year round, and flower festivals were held there even before it became a state. A large colorful garland of orchids worn around the neck is a sign of friendship and welcome for visitors to the islands all year. The biggest celebration of the year is the legal holiday Kamehameha day on June 11. Honolulu begins to fill with enormous floats, on which costumed people stand among scenes from the history of Hawaii. Someone is chosen every year to sit on the main float and represent King Kamehameha the First, who was the first of five monarchs to rule Hawaii over a hundred years.

These are only a small representation of the hundreds of holidays and celebrations observed throughout the United States. Each state has its own individual history and people, and the right to celebrate its own tradition. But one thing is certain – all Americans welcome you to celebrate with them!

Check your comprehension.

1. Why do Americans think that their traditions are rich?
2. What were many of American holidays originated from?
3. What do people of Pennsylvania celebrate?
4. What is Kwanzaa?
5. What principles is Kwanzaa based on?
6. Where do people hold contests for the best sculpture carved in ice?
7. How do people in Minnesota hold winter Carnivals?
8. What part of America is Rodeo held in?
9. What kind of a holiday is Kamehameha?
10. What does a colorful garland of flowers mean in Hawaii?

New Year

The beginning of the New Year has been welcomed on different dates throughout history. Ways of celebrating differ as well, according to customs and religions of the world.

In the United States the legal holiday is 1 January, but Americans begin celebrating on 31 December. Sometimes people have masquerade balls, where guests dress up in costumes and cover their faces with masks. According to an old tradition guests unmask at midnight.

On January first Americans visit friends, relatives and neighbors. There is plenty to eat and drink when you just drop in to wish your loved ones and friends the best for the year ahead. Many families and friends watch television together enjoying the Tournament of Roses Parade in California. At first the parade was a line of decorated horse-drawn private carriages.

In later years colleges began to compete in football games on New Year's Day and these gradually replaced other athletic competitions. The parade of floats grew longer from year to year and flower decorations grew more elaborate. Today the parade is usually more than five miles long with thousands of participants in the marching bands and on the floats. City officials ride in the cars pulling the floats. The queen of the tournament rides on a special float which is always the most elaborate one of the parade. The cities with the most unusual and attractive floral displays are awarded with prizes. After the Parade, the Rose Bowl football game is played.

The Mummer's Parade in Philadelphia is a ten-hour spectacle. Clowns, musicians, dancers and floats – all are led by King Momus dressed in gleaming satin. All these events make the first of January one of the most entertaining and relaxing holiday.

In most cultures people promise to better themselves in the following year. Americans have inherited the tradition and even write down their New Year's resolutions; eg.: "Mike Nikolson will stop smoking for good". But whatever the resolution most of them are broken or forgotten by February.

Check your comprehension.

1. When is New Year celebrated in America? 2. What are masquerade balls? 3. Do people of New Year parties unmask? When? 4. What shows are broadcasted on TV on January 1st in America? 5. What is Tournament of Roses Parade? 6. Who pulls the floats? 7. How many people do participate in the show? 8. What is Mummer's Parade? 9. Who leads the

floats at Mummer's Parade? 10. What resolutions do people write on New Year's Day?

Memorial Day (last Monday in May)

It was 1866, and the United States was recovering from the bloody Civil war between the North and the South. Surviving soldiers came home, some with missing limbs, and all with stories to tell.

In 1971, along with other holidays, President Richard Nixon declared Memorial Day a national holiday on the last Monday in May. Schools, offices and banks close for the day. On that day Americans honor the servicemen who gave their lives in past wars. Schools, clubs and churches decorate the cemeteries. They put up flags on the graves of army, navy and airmen. They hold memorial services in churches, halls, parks and cemeteries.

The first Memorial Day was held in 1868 all over the North. Americans marched to the graves of Civil War soldiers, bringing flowers and singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and other Civil War songs. Memorial Day is not limited to honor only those Americans from the armed forces. It is also a day of personal remembrance. Families and individuals honor the memories of their loved ones who have died. Church services, visits to the cemetery, put the flowers on graves, or even silent tribute mark the day with dignity and solemnity.

Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia is the nation's largest national cemetery. Not only are members of the armed forces buried here; astronauts, explorers and other distinguished Americans have all been honored with a special place here. President John Kennedy is buried in a spot overlooking Washington D. C.

It is an honor to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier all year. There are actually four soldiers buried in this spot: the unknown soldiers of the two World Wars, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam War. Each soldier represents all of those who gave their lives in the modern wars. Soldiers from the Army's Third Infantry guard the tomb twenty-four hours a day.

On Memorial Day President or Vice-President of the United States gives a speech and lays a wreath on the tombs. Members of the armed forces shoot a rifle salute in the air. Veterans and families come to lay their own wreaths and say prayers. There is a chance that one of the soldiers buried here is a father, son, brother or friend.

Check your comprehension.

1. When did the Civil War take place in America? 2. What was the reason of that war? 3. When was Memorial Day declared a national holiday in America? 4. Whom do Americans honour on this day? 5. How do schools and churches mark Memorial Day? 6. When was the first Memorial Day held? 7. Who are buried in Arlington National Cemetery? 8. What is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier? 9. Who guards the Tomb? 10. Who comes to the tombs with flowers and why?

Independence Day (June 4)

By the middle of the 1700s, the thirteen colonies that made up part of England's empire in the New World found it difficult to be ruled by a king 3000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean. They were tired of the taxes imposed upon them. But independence was a gradual and painful process. The colonists could not forget that they were British citizens, and that they owed allegiance to King George III.

A "tea party" and firing of the British soldiers into the crowd were two events that hurried destiny. These events united the colonists.

Virginia took the first step toward independence by voting to set up a committee to represent the colonies. This First Continental Congress met in September of 1774. They drew up a list of grievances against the crown which became the first draft of a document that would formerly separate the colonies from England. George Washington took command of the Continental Army and began fighting the British in Massachusetts. For the next eight years colonists fought strongly in the Revolutionary War.

Independence Day is celebrated on 4 July because that is the day when the Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence. From 8 July, 1776 until the next month, the document was read publicly and people celebrated whenever they heard it. The next year, in Philadelphia, bells rang and ships fired guns; candles and firecrackers were lighted. But the War of Independence went on until 1783, and in that year Independence Day was made an official holiday.

Every 4 July Americans have a holiday from work. Communities have day-long picnics with favorite food. The afternoon activities would not be complete without lively music, a friendly baseball game, a pie-eating or a watermelon-eating contests. Children enjoy participating in three-legged races – foot races, in which one person's left leg is tied to another person's

right leg, and they must run on three legs. Some cities have parades with people dressed as the original founding fathers who march in parade to the music of high school bands. At night people in towns and cities gather to watch the fireworks display. Wherever Americans are around the globe, they will get together for a traditional 4 July celebration.

Check your comprehension.

1. Whom did the British colonists owe allegiance to? 2. Why did they find difficult to be ruled by their King? 3. What do you remember about a “tea party”? 4. What state was the first to declare of independence? 5. When did the First Continental Congress meet? 6. What did the colonists express in their document adopted at the Congress? 7. How long did the Civil War last? 8. Why is June 4 celebrated as Independence Day? 9. How do Americans mark their Independence Day? 10. What are three-legged races?

Thanksgiving Day (Fourth Thursday in November)

The American Thanksgiving holiday began as a feast of thanksgiving in the early days of the American colonies almost four hundred years ago.

In 1620 a ship filled with more than one hundred people sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in the New World. The Pilgrims settled in what is now the state of Virginia. Their first winter in the New World was difficult. They had arrived too late to grow many crops; and without fresh food half the colony died from diseases, cold and lack of food. The following spring the Iroquois Indians taught them how to grow corn (maize), a new food for the colonists. They showed them other crops to grow in the unfamiliar soil and how to hunt and fish.

In the autumn of 1621 plentiful crops of corn, barley, beans and pumpkins were harvested. The colonists had much to be thankful for, so a feast was planned to thank the Indians for teaching them how to cook those foods. Without the Indians, the first settlers would not have survived. They invited the local Indian chief and ninety Indians. The Indians brought deer to roast with the turkeys and other wild game offered to the colonists. The feast lasted for a week. The colonists fired a canon as a salute. That was the first celebration of their thankfulness, giving thanks to God for their survival in the new land, Thanksgiving, and to this day the occasion is celebrated by all families.

Nowadays Thanksgiving Day is a family holiday. Family members usually gather for a reunion at the house of an older relative. All give thanks

together for the good things that they have done. They have a big family dinner – roast turkey, corn pudding, a pumpkin pie and cranberry jelly. In the spirit of sharing, civic groups and charitable organizations offer a traditional meal to those in need, particularly the homeless. They often have a big football game on that day.

Check your comprehension.

1. How did the American Thanksgiving holiday begin? 2. When did the boat with the English sail across the Atlantic Ocean? 3. Why did the people leave their Motherland for the New World? 4. Why was the first winter in the New World so difficult for the settlers? 5. Who taught the first settlers to survive in the New World? 6. How did the Indians help the new settlers survive? 7. Why did the settlers decide to make a feast in autumn? 8. Whom did they invite for their feast? 9. What did the settlers thank the Indians and God for? 10. How do people celebrate Thanksgiving Day today?

Easter (A Sunday in March or April)

The word “Easter” is named after Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring and sunrise, and she got her name from the word east, where sun rises. People celebrate the holiday according to their beliefs. Christians commemorate Good Friday as the day that Jesus Christ died, and Easter as the day that God was resurrected. Protestant settlers brought the custom of a sunrise service, a religious gathering at dawn to the United States.

Easter comes on a Sunday between March and April. At Easter people buy new clothes to wear on Easter Sunday. There is a popular belief that wearing three new things on Easter will bring good luck in the year. After church services many people like to take walks down the streets in their new Easter hats and suits. This colorful procession of people dressed in bright new spring clothes is called the “Easter Parade”.

At Easter people exchange presents which traditionally take the form of an Easter egg, a symbol of wealth. The ancient custom of dyeing eggs at Easter time is still very popular.

On Easter Sunday children wake up to find that the Easter Bunny has left them baskets of candy. The Easter Bunny is a rabbit-spirit. The rabbit is known to be the most fertile animal, that’s why it became a symbol of fertility. The Easter Rabbit is used to hide the eggs that children decorated earlier. Children hunt for the eggs all around the house. Neighborhoods and organizations hold Easter egg hunts, and the child who finds the most eggs

wins a prize. The custom of an Easter egg hunt began because children believed that hares laid eggs in the grass. Christians consider eggs to be “the seed of life” and so they are symbolic of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

British settlers brought the custom of rolling eggs down hills to America. This game has been connected to the rolling away of the rock from Jesus Christ’s tomb when He was resurrected. In the United States according to the tradition, the first Lady of the country invites the children of Washington to roll hard-boiled eggs down the hilly lawn of the Capitol building.

Check your comprehension.

1. What kind of a holiday is Easter? 2. Why do Christians commemorate Good Friday and Easter? 3. When does Easter come? 4. Why do people try and buy new dresses at Easter? 5. What is Easter Parade? 6. What presents do people traditionally exchange on Easter? 7. What does the Easter bunny symbolize? 8. What habit has the Easter Bunny? 9. What game can children play on Easter morning? 10. What is the custom of rolling eggs down connected to?

Christmas (December, 25)

Christmas is a joyful religious holiday when Christians all over the world celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. There are a lot of traditions connected with Christmas but perhaps the most important one is giving and receiving presents.

Immigrant settlers brought Father Christmas, whose name was gradually changed to Santa Claus, to the United States. Americans gave Santa Claus a white beard, dressed him in a red suit and made him a friendly old gentleman with red cheeks and a twinkle in his eye.

American children believe that Santa Claus lives in the North Pole with his wife. All year he lists the names of children, both those who have been good and those who have been bad. On December 24, Christmas Eve, Santa hitches his eight reindeer to a sleigh, and loads it with presents. The reindeer pull him and his sleigh through the sky to deliver presents to children all around the world that is if they had been good all year. Children leave a long stocking at the end of their beds on Christmas Eve, hoping that Santa Claus will come down the chimney during the night and bring them small presents, fruit and nuts.

Christmas is a traditional family reunion day. Going home for Christmas is a most cherished tradition of the holiday. No matter where you may be the rest of the year, being at home with your family and friends for Christmas is “a must”. This means that the house will be full of cousins, aunts and uncles that might not see each other during the year. Everyone joins in to help in the preparation of the festivities. Some family members go to choose a Christmas tree-to buy and bring home. Others decorate the house, or wrap presents. And of course, each household needs to make lots of food. Each family has a big Christmas dinner in the afternoon or in the evening. They usually eat roast turkey or goose and Christmas pudding.

On the Sunday before Christmas many churches hold a carol service where special hymns are sung. Sometimes carol-singers can be heard on the streets as they collect money for charity. Schools have Christmas parties. Children sing carols and recite Christmas poems.

Another important custom of Christmas is to send and receive Christmas cards, in which people wish each other “A Merry Christmas” and “A Happy New Year”.

Check your comprehension.

1. What kind of a holiday is Christmas? 2. What is the most pleasant tradition on Christmas? 3. How does American Santa Claus look like? 4. Where does Santa Claus live, as children think? 5. How does he get to the American children? 6. What do children leave for Santa Claus to put presents in? 7. What does reunion day mean? 8. What are family members engaged in on the eve of Christmas? 9. What is usual Christmas dinner consist of? 10. How do American people congratulate each other and what do they wish? 11. What did the settlers thank the Indians and God for?

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