

Christmas Traditions

By Sarah Gudgeon

I. Read

When you start to hear the festive songs on the radio, you know it is almost Christmas. Well, it depends, as sometimes the radio stations start playing these songs in November- aaargh! Anyway, when you hear “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” you know that it's time to start preparing for the big day. I'm sure you have all your own family traditions like putting up a tree in December or eating *panettone*, but do you ever wonder what other people do for Christmas?

Carol-singing is very popular in the USA; groups of people, young and old, sing in churches, parks and on the street. Rudolph is in fact an American song that first **aired** in 1948, although it was a story first. People might sing this song together, as well as religious **hymns**. The carol-singers often stand around a big Christmas tree, with its coloured **fairy-lights** and decorations.

The best place for Christmas trees is, of course, Canada and it is the Eastern province of Nova Scotia that produces the biggest and nicest **Fir** and **Pine** trees. Canadian people celebrate in the same way as Americans but they have a few different traditions too. People sometimes have cookie-baking parties and in some small towns and villages there is a tradition called 'mumming'. Neighbours wear costumes and knock on the doors where they live, saying 'Are there any mummers in?'. The neighbours must guess who their visitor is and then they all have a piece of Christmas cake and a drink together.

Both America and Canada are cold in December, but what about Australia? How do Australians celebrate Christmas in the sun? Well, very often Australian families and friends go to the beach for a Christmas barbecue. About 40,000 people visit the famous Bondi Beach in Sydney on Christmas day, to celebrate by the sea. This number includes international visitors. Australian or foreign, they don't eat roast turkey or Christmas pudding; they are more likely to eat fish and then ice-cream for dessert. Australians still put up a tree though, and decorate their houses with **tinsel**, **baubles** and Father Christmas ornaments.

Glossary

Aired- andato in onda

Hymns- musica e canzoni della chiesa

Fairy-lights – lucine

Fir and **Pine** – conifera e pino

Tinsel – una decorazione lucicante da mettere intorno al albero di natale

Baubles – palline da appendere sul albero di natale

2. Summarise the text

a. In America people celebrate Christmas by ...

b. In Canada people celebrate Christmas by...

c. In Australia people celebrate Christmas by...

3. Write about your dream Christmas.

I would love to spend Christmas...

4. Tell a partner about your perfect Christmas.

Teacher's Notes

2. Pre-task: Remind students that any verbs used after 'by' should be in the -ing form.

Sample answer:

In America people celebrate Christmas by ... *singing carols outside, sometimes around a Christmas tree.*

In Canada people celebrate Christmas by ... *having cookie-baking parties and going 'mumming'.*

In Australia people celebrate Christmas by ... *going to the beach and decorating their houses.*

3. Describe your perfect Christmas Day.

Pre-task: Remind students that any verbs used after 'spend' should be in the -ing form.

Sample answer:

I would love to spend Christmas *eating fish and drinking juice on a beach In Australia.*