

Carnivals Around the World

By Sarah Gudgeon

1. Read

Carnival is usually celebrated in the period before the countdown to Easter. In some countries, celebrations last two weeks and culminate with one massive Mardi Gras party. Mardi Gras is the last Tuesday before *Lent*, but it is often used to refer to the whole celebration period. Traditionally it is the time when Christians use up all the rich food in their cupboards (like butter, eggs, sugar and flour plus any other ingredients needed to make cakes!) before they begin to observe the period of Lent.

Carnival is still a big event in many countries around the world. In Italy, schools close for two days. Carnival in Venice attracts lots of tourists and is famous for its masked parades, but Brazil, the United States and Trinidad and Tobago are also well-known for their great street parties at this time of year.

In Rio de Janeiro, people wear bright costumes with *feathers* in their hair and dance the samba; in New Orleans, the people on the *floats* throw *beads* to the watching crowds, and in Trinidad and Tobago, they play *steelbands* to produce vibrant music that everyone dances to.

Whichever way you choose to celebrate carnival this year, you're sure to have brilliant fun. With music, dancing, *dressing-up* and lots of sweet snacks, what's not to enjoy?

Glossary

Lent: quaresima

feathers: piume

floats: carri da parata

beads: collane di perline

steelbands: strumento metallico a percussione

dressing-up: mettere costumi

2. Underline all the adjectives in the text

3. Answer these questions

- a. When is Mardi Gras?
- b. Which countries are well-known for celebrating carnival time?
- c. What do people in Rio de Janeiro do?
- d. What do people give to the crowds in New Orleans?
- e. What musical instrument do they play in Trinidad and Tobago?

4.

a. Create your own carnival! Work in groups. Decide on a theme and choose appropriate music and costumes.

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b. Present your ideas to the rest of the class.

Teacher's Notes

2. Carnival is usually celebrated in the period before the countdown to Easter. In some countries, celebrations last two weeks and culminate with one massive Mardi Gras party. Mardi Gras is the last Tuesday before *Lent*, but it is often used to refer to the whole celebration period. Traditionally it is the time when Christians use up all the rich food in their cupboards (like butter, eggs, sugar and flour plus any other ingredients needed to make cakes!) before they begin to observe the period of Lent.

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3.

- a. The last Tuesday before Lent
- b. Italy, Brazil, America and Trinidad and Tobago
- c. They dance the samba.
- d. Beads
- e. Steelpans