

May Day

di Sarah Gudgeon

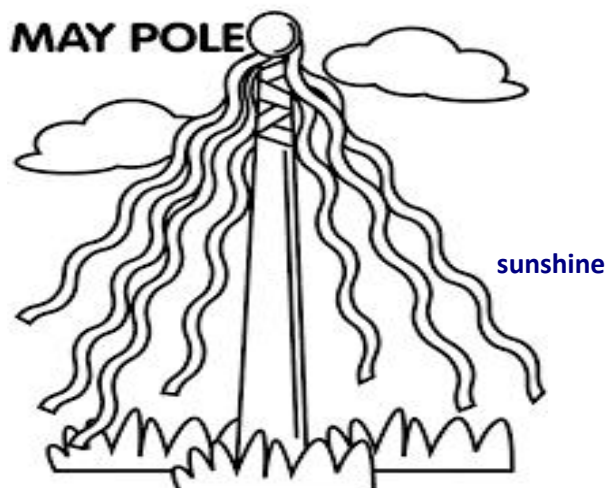
1. Read

May Day was first celebrated centuries ago, before the start of Christianity. We don't know the exact origins of this pagan festival but it was about the worship of trees, flowers and gods. The modern celebration of May Day comes from the ancient Romans. They worshipped Flora, the goddess of flowers and springtime. The Roman Empire meant that this tradition spread to other parts of Europe, including Britain. In Britain, May Day is a day to celebrate the arrival of Spring and there are a lot of traditions. A favourite tradition is to make a Maypole. Coloured ribbons are attached to a pole and children dance around the pole. There is also a procession and the prettiest girl from each village or town is named the Queen of the May. She usually wears a crown and sits on a carnival throne at the head of the procession. People dance in the streets too, and Morris Dancers perform traditional folk dances. Morris dancers have bells on their costumes and they make a wonderful noise. The only problem is the weather; it even rains in May in England sometimes!

2. Write True or False next to each sentence.

- Pagans worshipped trees, flowers and gods.
- The ancient Romans worshipped Flora, the goddess of trees.
- The Roman Empire took the May Day festival to Britain.
- Children dance around the May pole.
- The Queen of the May dances in the street.
- Morris Dancers have bells on their ears.

3. Look at this May pole. Colour each ribbon a different colour. Write one springtime word on each ribbon.



Teachers Notes

2. a. True b. False c. True d. True e. False f. False
3. Example springtime words: flowers, birds, plants, bees, warm, rainy