

Festivals in the United Kingdom



29

Harvest Festival

Every year at the end of summer, British people say thank you for the harvest¹. Harvest Festival is around the end of September when there is a full moon. People decorate churches with fruit and vegetables and there is a harvest loaf of bread². There is a special Harvest Festival service and people bring food to church. Churches give the food to the poor and elderly³.



Hallowe'en

We celebrate Hallowe'en on 31st October. It is the evening before All Hallows – All Saints Day: the important Catholic feast day. 'Hallow' means 'saint' in old English. The 31st October is also the eve⁴ of the ancient pagan Harvest Festival of Samhain. Imagine the life of the Celts many years ago. For them the 31st October is the end of 'the season of the sun'. The season of darkness begins and they think that the division between this world and the otherworld⁵ is very small. Spirits pass through it and come with the cold and dark. They light bonfires to frighten the spirits away. They dress up⁶ and dance round the fires. They take fire to their homes inside a turnip⁷ lantern. Today when we celebrate Hallowe'en, we light candles in pumpkin lanterns and put them in our homes. We dress up and have fun.

WORDS YOU NEED

1. harvest	raccolto	11. execute	giustiziare
2. loaf of bread	pagnotta	12. nativity play	rappresentazione della Natività
3. elderly	anziani	13. carol service	canti natalizi
4. eve	vigilia	14. crib	presepe
5. otherworld	aldilà	15. (Christmas) stocking	calza (di Natale)
6. dress up	(qui) mascherarsi	16. reindeer	renna
7. turnip	rapa	17. flaming	flambé
8. plot	complotto, congiura	18. joke	(qui) barzelletta
9. blow up	far esplodere		
10. gunpowder	polvere da sparo		

© Pearson Italia S.p.A.

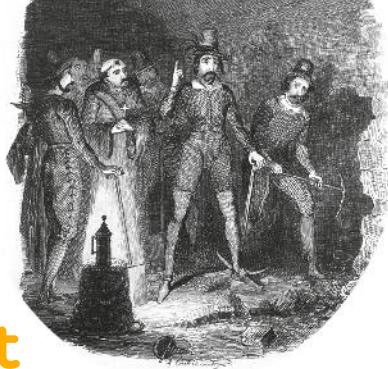
Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot

People in England celebrate Guy Fawkes or Bonfire night on 5th November every year. This celebration goes back to 1605 when James I is King. He is a Protestant and Guy Fawkes and 12 other Catholic men don't like him. They think of a plot⁸ and decide to blow up⁹ Parliament with gunpowder¹⁰ when the King is there. Someone tells the soldiers and they catch Guy Fawkes in the

cellars under the Houses of Parliament.

They execute¹¹ him.

In 1605 people light fires around London and have fireworks. They celebrate that their King is safe. Today people in England light bonfires in their gardens and cook potatoes and sausages on them.



Christmas

The season of Advent starts on the 4th Sunday before 25th December.

The word 'Advent' means 'coming' and people prepare for the feast of

Christmas. In the weeks before Christmas

British people send lots of cards, go to nativity plays¹² and carol services¹³. They decorate their homes with paper decorations, a crib¹⁴ and a Christmas tree. On Christmas Eve children hang stockings¹⁵ on the fireplace and leave a drink for Father Christmas and a carrot for Rudolph the reindeer¹⁶. On Christmas morning there are presents in the stockings. Many people go to church to celebrate the birth of Jesus and then they have a large Christmas lunch. There is roast turkey and for dessert a flaming¹⁷ Christmas pudding. On the table there are paper crackers. Inside there's a joke¹⁸, a small present and a paper hat.

The 26th December is Boxing Day. Churches give boxes of money to the poor.



Flaming Christmas pudding

29-30 MP3

1 Ascolta e leggi i testi, poi indica se le frasi sono vere (T) o false (F). Correggi le frasi errate.

- 1 Every year at the end of the winter, British people say thank you for the harvest. **T F**
- 2 On 30th October we celebrate Hallowe'en. **T F**
- 3 For Hallowe'en we light candles in pumpkin lanterns. **T F**
- 4 James I is a Catholic King and Guy Fawkes doesn't like him. **T F**
- 5 On 25th December children's stockings are full of presents. **T F**
- 6 For dessert on Christmas Day there is the Yorkshire pudding. **T F**

2 Rileggi i testi e completa la tabella con le informazioni mancanti.

	When	What happens	Why
Harvest Festival	around the _____ of September	People bring _____ to church. They decorate churches with _____ and _____.	It is a celebration to thank for the _____.
Hallowe'en	_____ October	People light _____ in pumpkin lanterns. They dress up.	To frighten the _____ away.
Guy Fawkes	_____ November	People light _____ and cook potatoes and _____.	To remember the _____ Plot.
Advent - Christmas	the _____ before 25 th December	People send _____, go to nativity _____ and decorate the Christmas _____.	To celebrate the _____ of Jesus.



1

Festivals in the United Kingdom

31 MP3

Comic Relief Day

Comic Relief Day is Red Nose Day because people wear red noses. Every other year¹ in March people all over the UK do unusual things. News readers sing and dance. It is fun and the slogan is, 'Do something funny for money.'

The following year in March there is Sport Relief, where people do sport and activities. Red Nose Day and Sport Relief raise money² for people who have difficult lives.



2

Lent and Easter

Lent³ lasts for forty days and it's the time when Christians prepare for Easter.

Shrove Tuesday⁴ is the day before Lent. The word 'shrove' comes from the Old English word 'shrive' and it means 'to confess'. In the Middle Ages people confess their sins⁵ in Lent and they don't eat rich foods like sugar, eggs and sweets. They eat them the day before.

Today we call Shrove Tuesday – **Pancake Day**. This is the day when everyone eats pancakes and there are races. People run with a frying pan⁶ and throw their pancake in the air.

Maundy Thursday⁷ starts the three-day celebration for Easter. During the religious service the King or Queen gives small silver coins ('Maundy money') to a group of elderly people. On Maundy Thursday we remember the Last Supper⁸ of Jesus.

Good Friday⁹ is the Friday before Easter. People go to church between 12 (noon) and 3 pm to remember Jesus Christ's Passion. They eat Hot Cross Buns, sweet bread rolls with a marzipan cross on the top.

The name **Easter** comes from *Ēastre*, the Anglo-Saxon goddess¹⁰ of spring. Easter represents birth and new life. The symbols for Easter are eggs and chicks¹¹. Children colour and decorate eggs. On Sunday morning there is an egg hunt. Children believe that the Easter Bunny hides the chocolate eggs in the garden. Sometimes people wear Easter Bonnets – beautiful spring hats, when they go to church. People eat Simnel cake. The eleven or twelve marzipan balls on the cake represent the apostles – eleven minus Judas.



3

© Pearson Education Ltd 2012

Unusual Festivals

Up Helly Aa is a Viking Festival on the Shetland Isles in Scotland. The Vikings ruled on Shetland for 500 years. This is a fire festival on the last Tuesday of January. 'Up' means 'end'; 'Helly' means 'holiday' and 'Aa' means 'all'. It celebrates the end of the season of Christmas. There is a torchlight¹² procession and people dress up as Vikings. They parade¹³ a long boat through the streets and then burn it.



4

The **Whittlesea Straw Bear Festival** takes place in January and celebrates the start of the agricultural year. A man or boy wears a straw costume and dances. There is a procession with dancers and musicians.



6



5

Cheese Rolling at Cooper's Hill in Gloucestershire takes place every spring. Someone rolls the cheese from the top of the hill and people run after it. The hill is very steep¹⁴ and the cheese is very fast. The winner is the fastest runner¹⁵. There is a prize for the winner... the prize is a whole cheese!

31-32 MP3

1 Ascolta e leggi i testi, poi abbinare le foto (1-6) alla loro descrizione (a-f).

- a ☐ The villagers burn a long boat.
- b ☐ People run with a frying pan.
- c ☐ There is a prize for the winner... the prize is a whole cheese!
- d ☐ They are sweet bread rolls with a marzipan cross.
- e ☐ A man wears a straw costume.
- f ☐ People wear red noses.

2 Rileggi i testi, poi indica se le frasi sono vere (T) o false (F). Correggi le frasi errate.

- 1 Shrove Tuesday is the day before Easter. T F
- 2 In the period of Lent, British people eat pancakes. T F

3 In Old English the word 'shrive' means 'to confess'. T F

4 Comic Relief Day is in February. T F

5 The slogan is 'Do something funny for news readers.' T F

6 Comic Relief helps people in need. T F

3 'Le feste nel tuo Paese'. Prepara un breve paragrafo (45-60 parole) su uno dei seguenti temi.

- Una festa invernale.
- Una festa storica.
- Feste in primavera.

Segui le seguenti tracce.

- When is it?
- What does it celebrate?
- How people celebrate it?



4 And in your country?

- Do you raise money for people who have difficult lives in your country?
- Do you do funny things?
- Do you raise money through sports activities?

WORDS YOU NEED

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. every other year | ogni due anni |
| 2. raise money | raccogliere soldi |
| 3. Lent | Quaresima |
| 4. Shrove Tuesday | Martedì Grasso |
| 5. sin | peccato |
| 6. frying pan | padella |
| 7. Maundy Thursday | Giovedì Santo |
| 8. the Last Supper | l'Ultima Cena |
| 9. Good Friday | Venerdì Santo |
| 10. goddess | dea |
| 11. chick | pulcino |
| 12. torchlight | fiaccola |
| 13. parade | far sfilare |
| 14. steep | ripido |
| 15. the fastest runner | il corridore più veloce |