

“British Holidays and Traditions”

Task 1. Read and complete the text with the words from the list.

Anniversaries; religious; significance; moon; traditions; public; population; merry

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN GREAT BRITAIN

There are only six ... holidays a year in Great Britain, that is days on which people need not go in to work. They are: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Spring Bank Holiday and Late Summer Bank Holiday.

In Scotland, the New Year’s Day is also a public holiday. Most of these holidays are of ... origin, though it would be right to say that for the greater part of the ... they have long lost their religious ... and simply days on which people relax, eat, drink and make

All the public holidays, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day observed on December 25th and 26th respectively, are movable, that is they do not fall on the same day each year. Good Friday and Easter Monday depend on Easter Sunday which falls on the first Sunday after a full ... on or after March 21st. The Spring Bank Holiday falls on the last Monday of May or on the first Monday of June, while the Late Summer Bank Holiday comes on the last Monday in August or on the first Monday in September, depending on which of the Mondays is nearer to June 1st and September 1st respectively.

Besides public holidays, there are other holidays, ... and simply days, for example Pancake Day and Bonfire Night, on which certain ... are observed, but unless they fall on a Sunday, they are ordinary working days.

Task 8. Read the text and complete the chart.

BRITISH HOLIDAYS

There are a number of holidays, which are celebrated in Great Britain every year. One of them is, of course, the New Year’s Day on the first of January. It is not so popular in England as in our country, but it is rather popular in Scotland. On that day people usually visit their friends and there is a lot of dancing and eating. In Scotland people bring a piece of coal for good luck in the New Year.

The next holiday of the year is St. Valentine’s Day. It is on the 14th of February. People buy or make Valentine cards and send them to the people they love. In March there is Mother’s Day. All the children and adults, come to their mothers on that day to express their love and gratitude.

In April there is Easter. At Easter children eat chocolate Easter eggs. Sometimes parents hide them in the house or in the garden and children have to look for them. In June there is Father's Day. On Father's Day children give or send their fathers and grandfathers cards and presents.

On the 31st of October there is a Halloween. They say ghosts and witches come out on Halloween. People make lanterns out of pumpkins. Some people have Halloween parties and dress as witches and ghosts. The 25th of December is Christmas Day. It is one of the people's favourite holidays. People put Christmas trees in their houses and deco rate them. There are beautiful Christmas decorations in the streets. On Christmas Eve everybody puts the presents under the Christmas tree. People say that at night Father Christmas puts presents into the stockings which children usually hang above their beds. The traditional Christmas meal is roasted turkey and Christmas pudding.

1. The New Year's Day	
2.	People buy or make cards and send them to the people they love
3. Mother's Day	
4.	Children eat chocolate Easter eggs
5. Father's Day	
6.	Ghosts and witches come out on this day
7. Christmas Day	

Task 4. Read the text and put questions to the following answers.

FEBRUARY 14TH

St. Valentine was a priest who lived in Rome and died for his faith in A. D. 170. His feast happens to fall on February 14th — the traditional day for lovers. But this is mere coincidence. He was not noted for helping lovers in distress and was not therefore the true patron saint of lovers.

There was in early times a strong belief that on this day birds choose their mates. To some extent this might explain why lovebirds seem to be such popular motifs on Valentine cards. A fourteenthcentury poet wrote: "On Valentine's Day all the birds of the air in couples do join".

There seems to be no limit to the variety of cards on sale for this celebration. They are happy to a good thing, cater for all tastes. You can pay anything from 10p to 10 pounds, depending on the depth of your love and the depth of your pocket!

Anonymity is, of course, part of the thrill of sending Valentine cards — you must not say who you are. The person receiving it must be left to wonder. You can send cards to anyone you like, or, for that matter, even people you don't like. There are cards specially printed to My Wife, My Husband, Mother, Father, Sweetheart, and, would you believe it, Grandmother and Grandfather. At least it is good to know that in this troubled world love is still living and spreading a little happiness, especially in dreary February.

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Task 6. Read and complete the text with prepositions.

MAY SPRING FESTIVAL

The May Spring Festival, which is celebrated ... the 1st ... May, has to some extent retained its old significance — that ... a pagan spring festival. Nowadays it is celebrated by children and young people ... many schools ... different parts ... Britain. It is celebrated ... garlands of flowers, dancing and games ... the village green, where they erect a maypole — a tall pole decorated ... flowers and ribbons. The girls put on their best summer dresses, put flowers ... their hair and round their waist. The most beautiful girl is crowned with a garland of flowers. After this great event there is dancing, and the dancers wear fancy costumes representing characters ... the Robin Hood legends. Spring Bank Holiday. Spring Bank Holiday is celebrated ... the last Monday ... May. It is an official holiday, when all the offices are closed and people don't go to work. Many people go to the country this day and have picnics.

