

# Holidays and traditions



## Ideas for classroom activities (Level: A1)

The photos on the calendar can be used for a variety of activities: warmers, fillers or longer speaking activities. Here are some ideas:

- Choose one of the holidays and brainstorm vocabulary in plenary or in small groups. For ideas, you can look at the texts on the next page: Next to each text is a list of key words associated with the holiday. As a follow-up, ask students to write an acrostic of the holiday with the words they have brainstormed (e.g. for **HALLOWEEN**: gHost, vAmpires, Lantern, chiLdren, OctOber, sWeets, witchEs, costumEs, pumpkiN).
- Around a specific holiday, take the opportunity to pick up on some of its traditions: Have your students write Valentine's or Christmas cards to each other. Find a recipe for brownies (for the Fourth of July) or pumpkin pie (for Thanksgiving) on the Internet and/or bring some to class. Create rituals for students' birthdays. Have a small Christmas party: Sing carols and read Christmas stories.
- As a lead-in to any of the activities, you might bring an object that is associated with a holiday (a stocking, a piece of Halloween candy, a green hat) and ask students what they think this is for.

You can also work with the copymaster on the following pages. When a specific holiday is coming up, you can cut out the corresponding text and the key words and let students complete it. They can refer to the glossary at the bottom of the text if they don't know a word. Then ask them to decide which photo on the calendar goes with this holiday.

You can also use several texts (or all of them) to have a longer session on holidays:

- PRE-READING:** In plenary, students match the holidays mentioned on the calendar to the photos (to make this easier, you can write numbers next to the photos or stick Post-its with numbers next to them). Ask students if they know anything about the holidays.
- READING:** Have your students work in pairs or small groups. Make one copy of the copymaster on Pages 2–4 for each pair or group. Ask the students to complete the texts on the left with the key words on the right. They can refer to the glossary at the bottom of each text if they don't know a word.
- POST-READING:** Check your students' answers in class. Then give each student a copy of the activities on Pages 5 and 6. The activities can be done in pairs or small groups. Activity d gives your students some ideas about how to start small conversations. Ask them to complete the sentences or questions and talk to different partners.

# Holidays and traditions (Level: A1)



<p><b>New Year's Eve</b></p> <p><b>When?</b> On _____.</p> <p><b>Where?</b> In many countries all over the world.</p> <p><b>What do people do on this day?</b> Many people _____ to parties or for dinner. At _____, there are often public fireworks, and people say " _____!"</p> <p><b>Glossary:</b> <b>Eve</b> Vorabend • <b>public</b> öffentlich • <b>fireworks</b> Feuerwerk</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> December</p> <p>go out</p> <p>Happy New Year</p> <p>midnight</p>
<p><b>Waitangi Day</b></p> <p><b>When?</b> On 6<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p><b>Where?</b> In _____.</p> <p><b>What do people do on this day?</b> Waitangi Day is the _____ of New Zealand. New Zealanders often _____ friends and family and have dinner _____.</p> <p><b>Glossary:</b> <b>national holiday</b> Nationalfeiertag</p>	<p>invite</p> <p>national holiday</p> <p>New Zealand</p> <p>together</p>
<p><b>Valentine's Day</b></p> <p><b>When?</b> On _____.</p> <p><b>Where?</b> In many countries all over the world.</p> <p><b>What do people do on this day?</b> _____ give each other small _____ or chocolates and send greeting _____.</p> <p><b>Glossary:</b> <b>lovers</b> Verliebte • <b>each other</b> sich gegenseitig</p>	<p>14<sup>th</sup> February</p> <p>cards</p> <p>lovers</p> <p>presents</p>
<p><b>Holi</b></p> <p><b>When?</b> In the _____ season.</p> <p><b>Where?</b> In _____ and Nepal.</p> <p><b>What do people do on this day?</b> Holi is an important Hindu _____. Another name is "the festival of _____" because people throw coloured powder or coloured water on each other.</p> <p><b>Glossary:</b> <b>season</b> Jahreszeit • <b>festival</b> Fest • <b>coloured</b> farbig, bunt • <b>powder</b> Puder • <b>each other</b> sich gegenseitig</p>	<p>colours</p> <p>festival</p> <p>India</p> <p>spring</p>



## Saint Patrick's Day

**When?** On \_\_\_\_\_.

**Where?** In \_\_\_\_\_ and many other countries all over the world.

**What do people do on this day?** Many countries celebrate this Irish holiday with \_\_\_\_\_ and festivals. People wear \_\_\_\_\_ clothes and shamrocks.

**Glossary:** **holiday** Feiertag • **parade** Festtagsumzug • **festival** Fest • **shamrock** Kleeblatt

17<sup>th</sup> March

green

Ireland

parades

## Easter Sunday

**When?** In \_\_\_\_\_.

**Where?** In many countries all over the world.

**What do people do on this day?** Christians all over the world go to \_\_\_\_\_ on Easter Sunday. One popular tradition is to decorate \_\_\_\_\_ (a symbol of life). In some cities there are colourful Easter \_\_\_\_\_.

**Glossary:** **popular** beliebt • **decorate** schmücken • **symbol** Symbol, Wahrzeichen • **colourful** bunt, farbenfroh • **parade** Festtagsumzug

church

eggs

parades

spring

## Independence Day

**When?** On 4<sup>th</sup> July.

**Where?** In \_\_\_\_\_.

**What do people do on this day?** On this national holiday, \_\_\_\_\_ have picnics or \_\_\_\_\_ with their family and friends, and there are big \_\_\_\_\_ and parades all over the country.

**Glossary:** **national holiday** Nationalfeiertag • **fireworks** Feuerwerk • **parade** Festtagsumzug

Americans

barbecues

fireworks

the USA

## My birthday

**When?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do people do on this day?** Some people have a party. A good \_\_\_\_\_ has a birthday \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ on it, music, food and drink, and, of course, lots of \_\_\_\_\_!

**Glossary:** **candle** Kerze

candles

birthday party

cake

presents



## Halloween

**When?** On \_\_\_\_\_.

**Where?** In many countries all over the world.

**What do people do on this day?** \_\_\_\_\_ in many countries wear scary costumes and walk to people's homes asking for \_\_\_\_\_. People sometimes make lanterns from \_\_\_\_\_ and put them in front of their houses.

**Glossary:** **scary** gruselig • **costume** Verkleidung • **sweets** Süßigkeiten • **lantern** Windlicht • **pumpkin** Kürbis

children

sweets

31<sup>st</sup> October

pumpkins

## Thanksgiving

**When?** On the fourth \_\_\_\_\_ in November.

**Where?** In \_\_\_\_\_.

**What do people do on this day?** People have big \_\_\_\_\_ with their family. There is always a turkey on the table! A typical dessert is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Glossary:** **turkey** Truthahn • **pumpkin pie** Kürbiskuchen

dinners

pumpkin pie

the USA

Thursday

## Christmas Eve / Christmas Day

**When?** On 24<sup>th</sup> / \_\_\_\_\_.

**Where?** In many countries all over the world.

**What do people do on this day?** In many English-speaking countries, people \_\_\_\_\_ the Christmas tree and sing \_\_\_\_\_ on Christmas Eve. They do not open their \_\_\_\_\_ until Christmas Day, 25<sup>th</sup> December! A typical Christmas dinner in Britain has Christmas pudding and mince pie.

**Glossary:** **Eve** Vorabend • **decorate** schmücken • **carols** Weihnachtslieder • **Christmas pudding** gekochter Pudding mit Rosinen, Nüssen und Brandy • **mince pie** mit Früchten und Gewürzen gefülltes süßes Törtchen

25<sup>th</sup> December

carols

decorate

presents

## Activities (Level: A1)

a Holidays lettersquare. Find 12 words.

C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E	C
K	H	P	V	T	F	Z	X	C	L
H	C	A	K	E	I	K	E	Y	A
O	T	R	K	T	R	O	M	R	V
L	B	A	R	B	E	C	U	E	I
I	U	D	T	K	W	A	T	N	T
D	X	E	R	C	O	R	S	N	S
A	C	I	A	N	R	O	O	I	E
Y	T	R	O	V	K	L	C	D	F
V	E	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	L
T	R	A	D	I	T	I	O	N	L



b True or false? Tick.

	true	false
1 Saint Patrick's Day is not only popular in Ireland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Holi, the festival of colours, takes place in autumn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 A typical food on Christmas Eve is pumpkin pie.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 In England, children open their presents on Christmas Day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Waitangi Day is the national holiday of Australia.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 On Thanksgiving, most people have turkey for dinner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

c What goes together? Draw lines and match.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 New Zealanders celebrate   | a picnics and barbecues on Independence Day.            |
| 2 Americans often have       | b to church on Easter Sunday.                           |
| 3 Children in many countries | c their national holiday with their friends and family. |
| 4 Many people go             | d wear costumes on 31 <sup>st</sup> October.            |



© Getty Images/E+/aurora



© Getty Images/iStock/avdeev007

**d Starting a conversation. Complete the sentences and talk to a partner.**

- 1 My favourite holiday is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Do you celebrate \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 3 What do you do on \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 4 Where do you go on \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 5 On my birthday I \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 On New Year's Eve I always \_\_\_\_\_.

- ◆ *My favourite holiday is Christmas. I like being with my family, and there is always good food. How about you?*
- *My favourite holiday is Halloween! I always make funny costumes for my children.*

## Key (Level: A1)

### Holidays and traditions

**New Year's Eve:** 31<sup>st</sup> December, go out, midnight, Happy New Year

**Waitangi Day:** New Zealand, national holiday, invite, together

**Valentine's Day:** 14<sup>th</sup> February, Lovers, presents, cards

**Holi:** spring, India, festival, colours

**Saint Patrick's Day:** 17<sup>th</sup> March, Ireland, parades, green

**Easter Sunday:** spring, church, eggs, parades

**Independence Day:** the USA, Americans, barbecues, fireworks

**My birthday:** birthday party, cake, candles, presents

**Halloween:** 31<sup>st</sup> October, Children, sweets, pumpkins

**Thanksgiving:** Thursday, the USA, dinners, pumpkin pie

**Christmas Eve / Christmas Day:** 25<sup>th</sup> December, decorate, carols, presents

**a down:** holiday, parade, fireworks, carol

**up:** costume, dinner, festival

**left to right:** celebrate, cake, barbecue, present, tradition

**b** 1 true 2 false 3 false 4 true 5 false 6 true

**c** 1c, 2a, 3d, 4b

**d** *students' own answers*