

Did you know?

World card making day



Births, marriages and deaths are not the only reasons people send cards. There are over one billion reasons why greetings cards are sent in the United Kingdom.

Yes, the United Kingdom is the world leader at one thing – buying and sending greeting cards. The British buy more cards than any other nation: about 33 cards per person annually. And when you take into account that more than 80% of cards are bought by women, then there are some ladies who are buying and sending an awful lot of cards. And the UK may also be the leader in making greeting cards as this is, according to one craft magazine, the number one craft hobby in the UK.

Christmas is, of course, the most popular time to send cards – Britons send over one billion of them every year (900,000 in boxed sets and 100,000 individually selected). As you may know, the first commercial Christmas card was sent in London by Sir Henry Cole in 1843 when he realized he was too busy to write individual Christmas greetings to all his colleagues and friends. Little did he know what he had started!

Today, the UK market spends about £1.75 billion (nearly €2 billion euros) on greeting cards and the UK is recognized in the global greeting card industry as being ten years ahead of the rest of the world in terms of innovation and creativity. The greeting card business is directly or indirectly responsible for the jobs of around 100,000 people: publishers, artists, writers, designers, packagers, distributors and retailers. There are over one thousand greeting card publishers in the UK – some employing only five people, others with hundreds on their payroll.

The majority of cards are still bought on the High Street – they seem to be one consumer product that has not been so successful online. You can buy cards that send good wishes on a happy event – a marriage, a birthday, a new baby, an exam passed – and for sad ones – the death of a relative, or leaving work. There are lots of religious occasions which merit cards, not just Christmas but also Hannukah, Ash Wednesday, Diwali and Eid al-Fitr can all be

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acknowledged with a greeting card. And you can also buy cards to wish people a good divorce, success with their plastic surgery and to console them when a pet dies. Or you can make your own cards following tips on many websites or in craft magazines for a personal touch.

Whatever the occasion, there is almost certainly a card you can buy or make for it. And it may be a funny, serious, beautiful or dramatic card. It may play music or sprinkle glitter; it may be elaborate or very simple. On **World card making day** on the first Saturday of every October you can imagine that scissors, glue and glitter will be in good use throughout the UK – and elsewhere.

If you would like to use **World card making day** in your lesson, then we have two activities for you, one at A1 level (and above) and one at A2 level. You will find the activities in the **Teacher's notes** and the **Worksheet**.

Teacher's notes

Make a welcome card (A1 level and above 20+ mins)

- Make sure you have one piece of A4 paper for each student. Bring in some coloured pens or pencils if you have any.
- On the board write: €2,000,000,000 on the board and tell the class that people in Britain spend this amount of money every year on a particular product. What is the product? Elicit *greeting cards* (you could mime writing one and posting it).
- Tell the class that the United Kingdom sends more greeting cards than any other country.
- Explain that they are going to make a Welcome greeting card.
- Give each student a piece of A4 paper and explain they are going to make the card for the person sitting **on their right**.
- Tell them to fold the paper into quarters (short side to short side, then in half – it should look like a card.) Make sure everyone has their card in the same position: a portrait card.
- Read this dictation aloud slowly and clearly: *At the top of the card write WELCOME. Below the word WELCOME draw a sun. Draw a smile on the sun. At the bottom of the card draw some flowers.*
- When everyone has finished drawing (some people will take longer than others) show the inside of the card. Tell students to write a message for the person sitting **on their right**, for example: *To Margit, Welcome to the class, best wishes, Jan.*

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- When everyone has written their main message in the card, each student hands the card to the person **on their left** who writes another very short message such as: *Hello, Nice to see you, Enjoy the English lesson, Have a good day*, and signs the card.
- Keep handing the cards round in a clockwise direction, making sure that everyone signs and writes a (very) short message in each card.
- Finally, the card should arrive back to the person whose name is inside the card.
- Everyone has their very own greeting card welcoming them to the class!

Teacher's notes

Greeting cards (Level A2 and above 10 mins)

- Make a copy of **Greeting cards**, one for each student.
- On the board write: *Christmas* and ask what people write in a Christmas card, for example *Merry Christmas and a happy new year*.
- Explain that students are going to do an exercise about greeting cards and what people write in them.
- Distribute **Greeting cards**, one for each student.
- Explain that they should match the occasion with the greeting. Allow 5 minutes.
- Help with any unknown vocabulary.
- Check answers together in class. Key: 1f, 2j, 3a, 4i, 5b, 6c, 7d, 8g, 9e, 10h
- With a partner, students discuss the questions.

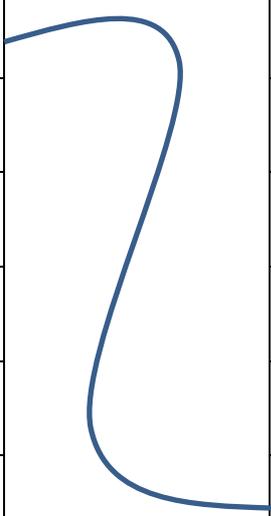
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Worksheet

Greeting cards

Match the occasion and the greeting.

Occasion		Greeting	
1	Retirement	a	Congratulations on your Ruby Wedding.
2	New baby girl	b	Many happy returns of the day!
3	40 th Wedding Anniversary	c	Congratulations on passing your driving test!
4	Wedding	d	Good luck in your new home.
5	Birthday	e	Many thanks for your help.
6	Driving test	f	Good luck with your new life of leisure.
7	Moving house	g	With sympathy for your loss.
8	Death	h	I love you ...
9	Thank you	i	Best wishes for your life together.
10	Valentine's Day	j	Congratulations on the birth of your daughter.



Follow-up activity

When did you last write and send a greeting card?

Where did you buy the card and who did you send it to?

Why did you choose that card?

Have you received any interesting greeting cards?

Tell your partner.