



IT'S TRADITION! PAT'S CHRISTMAS



C



Christmas is the same every year. But that's OK. It's tradition and we British just love tradition. It starts about six weeks before 25th December. That's when I make the Christmas cake. It bakes for about four hours and the kitchen smells fantastic!



H



I write my Christmas cards at the beginning of December. I send about 50 cards to friends and family, just to say Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. They have lovely stamps at Christmas, but I don't always post my cards. I just give them to people when I see them.



R



I love advent. My husband, Jack, sings in the local church choir and they give a concert two weeks before Christmas. The carols* are so beautiful. After the concert, there are mince pies and drinks at the vicarage. It's tradition!

*Weihnachtslieder



I



I enjoy buying Christmas presents, but Jack doesn't like Christmas shopping. So, about three weeks before Christmas, I go to the shops in Oxford Street with my daughter and Jack takes our grandchildren to the pantomime*. It's tradition! He loves it. This year, it's Peter Pan, Jack's favourite.

*Theaterstück für Familien



S(1)



When the children were small we used to go to a forest about ten miles north of our home and choose the Christmas tree, but now we buy one on the Internet. I do all my food shopping on the Internet, too. It saves so much time and it's not expensive.



T



About a week before Christmas Eve, I decorate the Christmas cake and Jack hangs up the decorations, the cards, the holly, the lights and the mistletoe. Jack thinks mistletoe is silly, but I like it outside my front door. It's tradition!



M



We always do the tree on Christmas Eve. Jack brings it in from the garden and I decorate it. At three o'clock, we have a cup of tea and listen to the carol concert on the radio. And then our visitors arrive and ... it's Christmas!



A(1)



Our children are married now. Paul lives in Germany with his family and we don't often see them at Christmas. But Ann and her family are only 20 minutes from us and we always spend Christmas together. They arrive at our house at about 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve and leave after breakfast on Boxing Day.



S(2)



The night before Christmas Day, Father Christmas visits every house with children. It's tradition. The children hang up their stockings before they go to sleep and in the morning they find them full of presents and sweets. Children in Britain get up very early on Christmas morning - about 5 o'clock! It's great fun!



D



After breakfast we usually go to church and then to the pub. Lunch is a very big meal - turkey with all the trimmings*! For dessert we have Christmas pudding with brandy butter. Then we pull the crackers, put on our paper hats and read our jokes. It's tradition.

* Truthahn mit allem drum und dran



A(2)



A lot of people listen to the Queen's speech at 3 o'clock, but we don't. We open the presents from family and friends, and we drink coffee and liqueurs. Jack likes that. At about 4 o'clock the family goes for a walk. I usually stay at home, have a little nap and organise tea. When they get back, we have a nice cuppa and a piece of Christmas cake.



Y



Well, that's it really. When I was a child, the family sat around the fire and chatted or told ghost stories. Now, we play games with the children or watch TV. Jack doesn't like watching TV at Christmas. He says it's not tradition. He's right, I know, but they show some very good films at Christmas! The next day is Boxing Day - nice and quiet!



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Teacher's notes

Preparation at home

- Suggest to the class the week beforehand that they bring in some Christmas biscuits and drinks. If you can bring in a Christmas cake or mince pies, all the better.
- Make a set of cards from the copymaster on page 1 for each team of 3 (or 4 or 6) students.
- Make one copy of the complete text for each student to take home.
- Have a prize for the winning team.

In class

- Divide the class into teams of 3 (or 4 or 6) students. Try not to have more than four teams.
- The class will hear a text about a typical Christmas in Britain, Pat's Christmas. Afterwards, they will have a Pub Quiz with questions on the text.
- Read the complete text to class.
- Give each team a set of cards. Make sure they are not in the correct order.
- Students work with their team and try to put the cards in the correct order to find the two mystery words.
KEY: CHRISTMAS DAY. Make sure students have the two Ss and As in the correct order.
- Students re-read the texts together and make a list of words they do not understand.
- In class, go through unfamiliar vocabulary. Limit this to one word from each card for each team.
- With real beginners, read the whole text to them again. With a more confident group, let students read the text in turn. The text should now be very familiar and students should be able to answer the questions in the quiz.
- Collect in the cards!

Pub Quiz

- Ask each group to decide on a Christmassy name for their team and write the names on the board.
- If students have brought things to eat and drink, they should get these out now.
- The Pub Quiz has a maximum of 12 rounds with four questions in each round. The questions are very easy and are based on the information in the texts. If time is short, reduce the number of questions for each card.
- As you read out each question, the teams should write down their answers on a piece of paper.
- Go through the questions again, giving out the correct answers. Ask who has got the answers right and award points to each team on the board. The team with the most points wins the prize.
- Give each student a copy of Pat's Christmas to take home.

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Teacher's notes: Vocabulary

Christmas pudding and Christmas cake: These should not be confused! Christmas pudding is a very rich dessert full of dried fruit. It is steamed for several hours before it is served with brandy butter or brandy sauce and mince pies. Christmas cake is a rich fruit cake which is covered with marzipan and white icing and then decorated to look Christmassy. It is served in slices with a cup of tea. Both the pudding and cake keep for a long time, but – because they taste so good – they are seldom around much after New Year.

Christmas cards: In Britain, everybody sends everybody a Christmas card! People often buy charity cards so that some of the money goes to a good cause. The cards are hung up as decoration in peoples' homes. The tradition dates back to the mid-nineteenth century and started shortly after the introduction of a national postal service. The first Christmas stamp was printed in Canada in 1898.

Church choir: Singing in a choir is a popular hobby in England. Many church choirs organise a special concert of carols in the lead-up to Christmas. A very famous example of this is *The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College Cambridge* which is broadcast on Christmas Eve.

Carols: Carols are the religious songs sung in church at Christmas rather than Christmas songs sung by pop singers and groups. Several carols have melodies that German students would recognise, for example *Adeste fideles (O Come all ye Faithful)*.

Mince pies: These small pies are filled with mincemeat, which is a jam-like mixture of sugar, raisins, currants, sultanas and apples. There is no (minced) meat in a mince pie!

Christmas tree: The Christmas tree tradition was introduced to Britain in the 19th century by Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg und Gotha.

Food shopping on the Internet: Most major supermarket chains in Britain now offer an online shopping service with home delivery. This service is becoming particularly popular with retired people who find it difficult to travel to the supermarkets.

Christmas shopping: From about mid-September, shops start putting up their Christmas displays. Most towns have street lights and decorations. The most well-known displays of lights are in Oxford and Regent Street, two of the main shopping streets, in London. The lights here are turned on in November, often by a celebrity.

Pantomime: A pantomime is a musical play or show often based on a fairy tale or children's story, for example Peter Pan, Cinderella, or Sleeping Beauty. Pantomimes are traditionally put on over the Christmas period and are aimed at families and children. Very often a relative takes the children to 'the panto' as a pre-Christmas treat.

Holly: is used a lot in Christmas decorations in Britain and is often mentioned in Christmas carols, for example in *The holly and the ivy*. Holly is very symbolic: Green for life, red berries for blood, and prickles for the crown of thorns.

Mistletoe: As in Germany, people kiss under the mistletoe.

Christmas Eve: 24th December. The day for final shopping and preparations, and the last chance to travel to relatives by public transport as there are almost no trains or buses on Christmas and Boxing Day in Britain. Children go to bed relatively early after hanging up their stockings, but the teens and twens are out at pubs, parties and discos.

Father Christmas / stockings: Father Christmas in his red fur coat trimmed with white, his black boots and long white beard, has a flying sleigh that is drawn by six reindeer. Traditionally, he lands on the roof and comes down through the chimney to deliver the presents. In America, children call him Santa Claus. There is no Saint Nikolaus on 6th December.

Crackers: Crackers are an essential part of Christmas in Britain. Crackers can be pulled at the beginning of Christmas dinner, but are often saved to the end of the meal. Traditionally, a cracker contains a paper hat, a small gift and a joke or quiz question.

Queen's speech: Since the first Christmas speech by King George V in 1932, the reigning monarch has sent a Christmas message to the people wishing them a Merry Christmas every year. Traditionally, the monarch spoke at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Ghost stories: Probably the most famous Christmas ghost story, *A Christmas Carol*, was written by Charles Dickens. It tells the story of a mean old man, Scrooge, who is visited by three ghosts and then changes his way of life. Many modern ghost stories are shown on television at Christmas and some of them are very scary!

Boxing Day: A public holiday celebrated on the 26th of December. A lot of people stay at home and relax or visit their families. Others go shopping, because on this day, the shops have sales.

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Pub Quiz – questions and answers

C	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When does Christmas start for Pat? What does Pat make? How long does the cake bake? How does the kitchen smell? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Six weeks before 25th December. The Christmas cake. For about four hours. Fantastic.
H	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When does Pat write her Christmas cards? How many cards does she send? What's 'Frohe Weihnachten' in English? Does she post all her cards? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of December. About 50. Merry Christmas. No, she doesn't.
R	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is the time before Christmas called? When is the church choir's concert? What is 'carol' in German? Where do they eat mince pies after the concert? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advent. Two weeks before Christmas. Weihnachtslied. At the vicarage.
I	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does Jack like buying Christmas presents? Where does Pat do her Christmas shopping? Who does she go Christmas shopping with? Where does Jack take the grandchildren? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> No, he doesn't. Oxford Street. With her daughter (Ann). To the pantomime.
S(1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How far was it to the forest? Where do they buy the tree now? What else does Pat buy on the Internet? Why does she buy on the Internet? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> About 10 miles. On the Internet. All her food shopping. It saves time (and it's not expensive).
T	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When does Pat decorate the Christmas cake? Name two things that Jack hangs up a week before Christmas Eve. What does Jack think is silly? What is 'holly' in German? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> About a week before Christmas Eve. The decorations / the cards / the holly / the lights / the mistletoe. Mistletoe Stechpalme.
M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When do Pat and Jack do the Christmas tree? Who decorates the Christmas tree? What do they drink at three o'clock? What do they listen to? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> On Christmas Eve. Pat. A cup of tea. The carol concert.
A(1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How many children have Pat and Jack got? Where does Paul live with his family? How far away does Ann live? When does Ann's family leave? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Two. In Germany. About 20 minutes. (After breakfast) on Boxing Day.
S(2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What do children in Britain hang up before they go to bed on Christmas Eve? When does Father Christmas come? What does Father Christmas bring the children? When do children get up on Christmas morning? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A stocking. In the night before Christmas Day. Presents and sweets. Very early, about 5 o'clock.
D	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where do they usually go after breakfast? What do they eat for lunch? What do they eat with the Christmas pudding? When do they pull the crackers, before or after the pudding? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To church (and to the pub). Turkey with all the trimmings. Brandy butter. After the pudding.
A(2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What do a lot of people listen to at 3 o'clock? What does Pat's family drink with their coffee? What time does the family go for a walk? What does Pat have before she organises tea? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Queen's speech. Liqueurs. About 4 o'clock. A little nap.
Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of stories did Pat's family use to tell? Does Jack like watching TV at Christmas? What's the day after Christmas Day called? Why does Pat like Boxing Day? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ghost stories. No, he doesn't. Boxing Day. It's nice and quiet.