

Midsummer Teaching notes

Aims

- To present and practise vocabulary about Midsummer traditions, and to recycle the present simple.
- To encourage students to discuss different traditions, to enable students to write a narrative in the past simple, to encourage peer correction.

What do you need?

A sheet of plain paper for each student; pencils, crayons or felt tips.

Vocabulary and reading

Exercise 1

- Ask the students to look at the six photos. Ask them in which month they think the festival takes place. Write their answers on the board.
- Ask if they can name any of the objects. Elicit answers and write them on the board.
- Pre-teach the remaining words and write them on the board. Ask students to repeat the words and check their pronunciation. Then remove the words from the board.
- Ask the students to complete exercise 1.

Answers

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| 1 bonfire | 4 maypole |
| 2 flowers | 5 harvest |
| 3 folk costume | |

Exercise 2

- Tell the students they are going to read a text about Midsummer traditions.
- Pre-teach the following vocabulary: *pagan, medicinal, evil, pillow*.
- Read the question and ask the students to read the text quickly.

Answer

It is both a Christian and a pagan festival. Refer back to the answers on the board from exercise 1.

Exercise 3

- Ask the students to read the text again and answer the questions.

Answers

- 1 The Midsummer festival in Northern Europe is between 20th June and 26th June.
- 2 In ancient times, people picked flowers for their medicinal powers and lit bonfires to scare away evil spirits.
- 3 The festival is important for farmers because they hope for a successful autumn harvest.
- 4 Young people pick flowers and put them under their pillow. They hope to dream about their future husband or wife.
- 5 Midsummer is also a Christian festival because St John's Day is on 24th June.
- 6 People eat potatoes, fish and fruit.

Project: Write a report

Exercise 1

- Ask the students to match the verbs in the first word pool and the words in the second to form phrases. Explain that they will be useful for exercise 2.

Answers

- 1 dream about a future husband or wife
- 2 eat traditional food
- 3 listen to traditional music
- 4 pick bouquets of flowers
- 5 put on folk costumes

Exercise 2

- Ask the students to imagine that they were on holiday in Sweden during the Midsummer festival. Explain that they are going to write a diary entry about what they saw and what they did. Tell them to use phrases from exercise 1, and to also look at the picture strip to get ideas. Remind them that they should use the past tense. Encourage them to decorate their diary entry.

Exercise 3

- Ask the students to swap their diary entry with a partner. Ask them to tell each other:
- Which parts they think are good and why.
- Which parts could be improved and how.
- Ask them to point out any errors they find.

Midsummer

Vocabulary and reading

1 Underline the words and write them under the pictures.

bonfire wreath husband and wife folk costume yew ball maypole bonfire folk costume harvest pot flowers



husband and wife



1 _____



2 _____



3 _____



4 _____



5 _____

2 Is Midsummer a pagan festival, a Christian festival, or both?

Midsummer is celebrated in Northern Europe between 20th June and 26th June. This pagan festival is older than Christianity. In ancient times, people picked flowers for their medicinal powers and lit bonfires to scare away evil spirits. Now it is associated with fertility, nature and hopes for a successful autumn harvest.

In Sweden, people dance around a maypole to traditional music. Many wear traditional folk costumes. Young people pick bouquets of flowers and put them under their pillow. They hope to dream about their future spouse.

But Midsummer is also a Christian festival. St John's Day is on 24th June and is an important part of the festival.

Like any festival, people cannot celebrate without food! The most popular dishes are potatoes, fish and fruit.

3 Read the text again and answer the questions.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 When is the Midsummer festival celebrated?
_____ | 4 Why do young people pick flowers?
_____ |
| 2 How was it celebrated in ancient times?
_____ | 5 Why is Midsummer a Christian festival too?
_____ |
| 3 Why is the festival important for farmers?
_____ | 6 What do people eat during the festival?
_____ |

Midsummer

Project: Write a report

1 Make phrases with the words in the boxes.

dance dream eat listen pick put on

about a future husband or wife
around a maypole bouquets of flowers
folk costumes to traditional music
traditional food

dance around a maypole

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

2 Look at the pictures and imagine you were in Sweden for the Midsummer festival. Write a report about how you celebrated it.

- 1 Use the phrases in exercise 1.
- 2 Look at the pictures in the comic strip below to help you.
- 3 Add as much information as you can.
- 4 Use the past simple.
- 5 Decorate your diary entry with pictures.



3 Work in pairs. Swap your diary with your partner.

- 1 Read your partner's diary.
- 2 Which parts do you think are good? Why?
- 3 Which parts do you think could be improved? How?