Special Days and Holidays



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Contents

Welcome
Se Valentine's Day 5
Thanksgiving7
B Halloween
Diwali
🕥 Vaisakhi
🕥 Easter
Hanukkah
Norooz
(Christmas
Ramadan
New Year's
Remembrance Day
(E) Lunar New Year
Answers for exercises

Welcome

This e-book is part of a series called Best of The Reader. The stories in the e-books are from *The Westcoast Reader*. It is a newspaper for adults who are improving their English reading skills.

To the reader

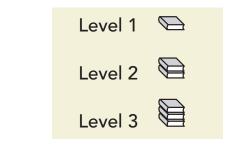
✓ You can use this book in a classroom, with a tutor, or on your own.

✓ Each story has exercises to go with it. These exercises can help you improve your English and reading skills.

✓ You can check your answers at the end of the book.

Three reading levels

There are three reading levels in this book. Here are the symbols for each level:



To the teacher

Learners can read the articles and do the exercises individually, in pairs, or in groups.

The topics can be explored further through discussion or follow-up activities.

Teachers' Guide

The Teachers' Guide on this website has ideas on how to use the e-books with students.

Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Capilano University for this project.

A special thank you to the learners and teachers who helped choose the articles for this book.

All of the material in this book first appeared in The Westcoast Reader (1982 to 2009). Some of the articles have been updated. Most of the exercises and activities for learners are based on material from The Westcoast Reader Teachers' Notes (1982 to 2009).

Credits

Photos

Front cover—Halloween: Northshore News (Victor Aberdeen); Valentine's Day: The Vancouver Sun; Lunar New Year: Metro Vancouver (Jeff Hodson)

Rage,5—couple: The Vancouver Sun, children: Northshore News (Mike Wake-Page 7—iStockphotos (top) Thanksgiving ©SJ Locke, (bottom) food ©Cathleen Clapper; Page 9—top: The Vancouver Sun, bottom: iStockphoto ©SJ Locke; Page 10: Edmonton Journal; Page 11: Northshore News (Victor Aberdeen); Page 12—left: The Vancouver Sun, right: The Province; Page 14: iStockphotos crucifixion ©Wim Burger, kids ©Edyta Line, basket: St. Elias Church; Page 16: The Vancouver Sun; Page 18—table: North Shore News (Mike Wakefield), family: Babak Saberi; Page 20: iStockphoto; Page 21: choir: Central Coast Children's Choir, cookie making: iStockphoto, potluck: Corinna Rulh, lights and students: The Vancouver Sun; Page 24: man praying: Muslim Times; architect: The Vancouver Sun; Page 27: iStockphoto; Page 30—ceremony, poppy: The Province, veteran: The Vancouver Sun, graves: Canadian Mint; Page 32: The Vancouver Sun

Illustrations

Page 6, 9 (flashlight, pumpkin),10, 16 (hanukkiah), 22, 27, 28: Nola Johnston; Page 5, 9 (ghost), 14, 15, 16 (dreidel), 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 30: Guy Parsons; Page 22: ©King Features Syndicate. Reproduced with permission—Torstar Syndication Services; Page 29 (rabbit) Government Information Office, Republic of China (Taiwan); Religious symbols: iStockphoto

Valentine's Day





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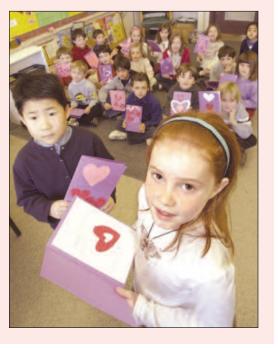
Valentine's Day is on February 14. It is a romantic day for many adults. They buy cards, chocolates or flowers for each other. They say, "I love you."



How to say "I love you"

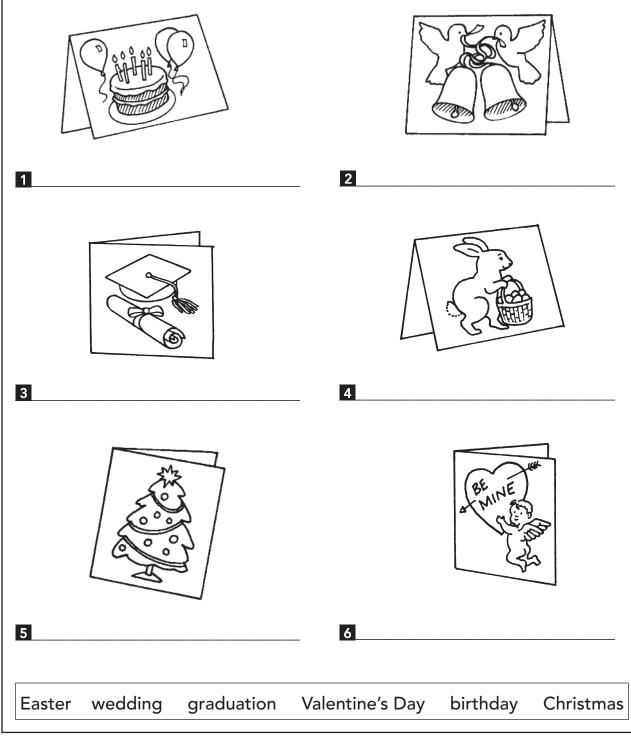
French: Je t'aime Spanish: Te amo Cree: Kisakihitin Cantonese: Ngo oi ney Russian: Ya tyebya lyublyu

How do children celebrate? Young children give each other valentines. They often make cards at school.



Cards

Some people send cards on Valentine's Day. They also send cards for other occasions. Choose a word from the box to go with each card. Write the word on the line.



6

Thanksgiving

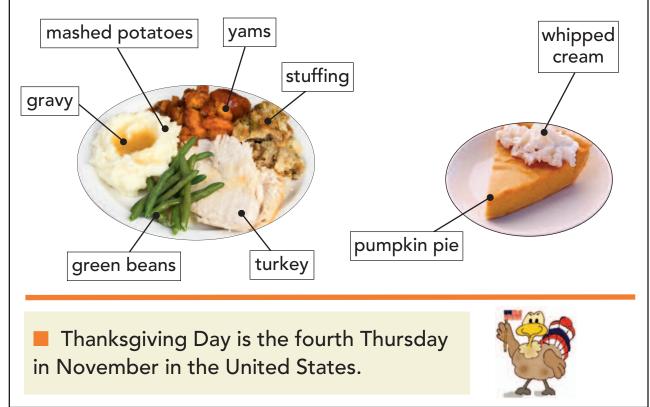
Thanksgiving is the second Monday in October.

Families and friends get together. They have a big meal.

Turkey and pumpkin pie are popular at Thanksgiving.



What's for Thanksgiving dinner?



Thanksgiving

Write answers on the lines.

1. When is Thanksgiving?

2. What do many people do for Thanksgiving?

3. What foods are popular at Thanksgiving?

Where do the words belong?

	se 18 words rect boxes.	months	food	days
October	Christmas			
sister	pie			
turkey	Monday			
lunch	uncle			
Easter	July	family	meals	holidays
Thursday	salad			
husband	breakfast			
dinner	Sunday			
May	Thanksgiving			

Halloween





Halloween is on October 31.In the evening,children dress up in costumes.They go trick or treating.They visit neighboursand ask for treats.Most peoplegive the children candy.

Many people carve jack-o-lanterns for Halloween.

Tips to keep children safe on Halloween

Many children go trick or treating on the evening of October 31.

Here are some tips to keep children safe on Halloween.

✓ An adult should go trick or treating with young children.

✓ Older children should trick or treat in groups.

✓ Adults and older children should carry flashlights.



 Remind children to look both ways before they cross streets.

 Check all the treats before children eat them.

✓ Make sure costumes are short. Children can trip on long costumes and fall.



How to carve a jack-o-lantern



 Cut out the top of a pumpkin with a sharp knife.



Take out the seeds with a big spoon.



Draw a face on the pumpkin with a marker.Cut out the face with a knife.



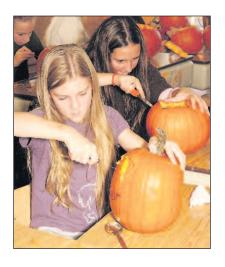
Put a candle inside the pumpkin.

The Westcoast Reader 10/2004

Carve a jack-o-lantern

Here are six steps for carving a jack-o-lantern. Put them in the correct order.

- _ Cut out the face with a knife.
- ____ Put a candle inside the pumpkin.
- ____ Cut out the top of the pumpkin.
 - ____ Draw a face on the pumpkin.
 - Buy a pumpkin.
 - Take out the seeds.



Same word has different meanings

Sometimes a word can have different meanings. For example:

- 1. Children can trip on long costumes.
- 2. Ana took a trip to Mexico.

Here are some words that can have more than one meaning. Match each word to one of its meanings.

- _____ 1. tip
 - 2. test
- b. a large stone
- _ 3. watch c. to teach
- 4. ring
- 5. train
- 6. rock f. an exam

Do you know other meanings for these words?

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a. the sound a bell makes

d. a clock you wear on your wrist

e. a useful idea or suggestion

Diwali

Diwali is a popular fall festival in India. It is sometimes called the Festival of Lights.

Diwali marks the beginning of the new year for Hindus. Sikhs also celebrate Diwali.

Diwali traditions

✓ Many people wear new clothes on Diwali.

- ✓ They visit family and friends.
- ✓ They share sweet snacks.



✓ They decorate their homes with small oil lamps called *diyas*.





This is a symbol for Hinduism.

Vaisakhi

Vaisakhi is in April. It is an important festival in parts of India.

Some Sikh communities in British Columbia have parades to celebrate Vaisakhi.



A Vaisakhi parade



This is a symbol for Sikhism.

Finish the sentences

Draw a circle around the correct answer.

- Diwali is a _____ festival.
 a. spring
 b. fall
- Sikhs celebrate _____.
 a. Hanukkah
 b. Vaisakhi
- 3. People wear new ______
 on Diwali.
 a. clothes
 b. hats
- 4. Some Sikh communities in B.C. have _____ for Vaisakhi.
 a. art exhibits
 b. parades

- 5. Many Sikh _____ wear turbans.a. menb. girls
- 6. Diwali is sometimes called the Festival of _____.a. Lightsb. Food
- Vaisakhi is in _____.
 a. November
 b. April
- 8. Diwali is the start of the new year for _____.
 a. Hindus
 b. Muslims

Missing letters

Add the missing vowels (a, e, i, o, u) to finish each word. All these words are on page 12.

 1. D_w_l_
 5. spr_ng
 9. p_r_d_

 2. S_kh
 6. n_w
 10. sw__t

 3. H_nd_
 7. y_r
 11. c_l_br_t_

 4. V_s_kh_
 8. l_mp
 12. _pr_l

Easter —

Good Friday

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday. It is a general holiday in most parts of Canada. Many businesses and schools close for the day.

On Good Friday, Christians remember the day Jesus died on the cross.



Easter Sunday

On Easter Sunday, Christians celebrate their belief that Jesus rose from the dead. Churches have special services.



Easter traditions

Children decorate eggs for Easter.



 Young children look for coloured eggs and candy on Easter morning. They believe an imaginary rabbit called the Easter bunny hides the eggs.

Pascha

Easter is called Pascha in the Eastern Orthodox Church. In many years, Easter and Pascha are on different dates.





This is a symbol for Christianity.

Finish the sentences Fill in the blanks with words from the boxes. 1. Good _________ is a general holiday in most parts of Canada. 2. It is the Friday before Easter _______. decorate 3. Many businesses and ________ close for the day. services 4. Easter is a Christian _______. holiday 5. On Easter, churches have special ______. schools 6. Children like to ________ eggs at Easter. Sunday

Scrambled eggs Unscramble the letters in the eggs. All the words have double letters. S u n e b Y n S b S n () 2 1 С r S h S S 0 0 S С 0 4 3

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15

Hanukkah ——



A woman lights a hanukkiah on the last night of Hanukkah.

Hanukkah is a celebration of a great victory in Jewish history.

Hanukkah is usually between late November and late December. The holiday lasts for eight days.



This is a symbol for Judaism.

Traditions

During Hanukkah, families light candles on a candlestick called a *hanukkiah*.

There are eight candles on a hanukkiah—one for each night of Hanukkah. The ninth candle is the *shamash*. It is used to light the other candles.



Hanukkiah

The middle candle is the shamash.

A hanukkiah is also called a Hanukkah menorah.

Children play traditional games such as dreidel (say: DRAY-dul). Each player takes a turn spinning a dreidel. It is a top with four sides. Players usually win chocolates or coins.



Find the words

Find these wo Some words g some go down		† 0	r s	a x	d s	i c	t k	i b	o c	n Y	a q	l i
candle	light	p	I	S	р		f		0	w	v	m
chocolates	menorah	d	r	e	i	d	e	Ι	i	j	0	e
coins	middle	۵	k	×	n	k	Ι	Z	n	z	i	n
days	spin		i	g	h	t	Ι	f	S	r	e	ο
dreidel	top	С	h	0	С	0	I	۵	†	e	S	r
eight	traditional	k	9	9	9	m	i	d	d	Ι	e	٥
eight	naanionai	n	V	k	С	۵	n	d	I	e	Ь	h
		d	۵	Y	S	Z	e	i	g	h	+	Ь

What word is missing?

Norooz —



Norooz is the the new year for Iranians. It begins on the first day of spring.

Families get together to celebrate the holiday.



Traditions

Norooz has many traditions. For example, Iranian families set a table called "haft seen." Each item on the table has a special meaning. For example:

- coins for wealth
- garlic for health
- fruit for love



Which word does not belong?

Read the words in each row. First, cross out the word that does not belong. Then write the reason that it does not belong. Finally, write a new word that does belong.

1. tulip daffodil apple rose	4. holiday spring summer fall
Reason:	Reason:
New word:	New word:
2. father year son mother	5. April March June winter
Reason:	Reason:
New word:	New word:
3. Iran Paris Pakistan Iraq	6. apple table apricot date
Reason:	Reason:
New word:	New word:

What's the right word?

Draw a line under the correct word to finish each sentence.

- 1. Norooz is the new year for Iranians / Hindus.
- 2. Norooz ends / begins on the first day of spring.
- 3. Iranians set a table for Norooz called "haft seen" / "haji firuz."
- 4. Each item on the table has a special taste / meaning.
- 5. India / Iraq borders Iran.

alson anons an Az

Conception of the

Christmas ——

Christmas Day is December 25. On this day, people celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Churches have special services.



Traditions

There are many Christmas traditions. For example:

People decorate a Christmas tree.



and Happy New Year."

The Westcoast Reader 12/2007

Have fun during the holidays

Go to a music concert. Many schools, churches, and community centres have free holiday concerts.



Bake some cookies.Homemade cookies are a great holiday gift.







* Have a potluck dinner with family and friends. Everyone can bring some food to share.



✤ Go for a walk in your area.Look at the holiday lights.



* Collect food at your school or workplace. Donate the food to your local food bank.



The Westcoast Reader 12/2008



Baby Blues



Choose the co	orrect words	
Put a checkmark (🗸) b	eside the two words that o	correctly finish each sentence.
1. Some people Clean		• exchange
	ootluck during the	holidays.
3. Some people bake pumpkins	at Christmas.	• cookies
4. Some people donate	to their local food	banks.
5. During the holidays,a school	some people go to a music	c concert at a church

Silent letters

Many words in English have silent consonants. For example, the "t" in "Christmas" is silent. Write the silent consonant in each word on the line next to the word. When you are finished, read the words to a partner.

1. listen	5. calf	9. climb
2. walk	6. island	10. answer
3. wrap	7. honest	11. receipt
4. autumn	8. knock	12. scissors

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23

Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the lunar (moon) calendar. It is a very important month for Muslims.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast between dawn and sunset. This means they do not eat or drink during the day.

Muslims pray five times a day. They often say extra prayers during Ramadan.



End of Ramadan

Muslims celebrate at the end of Ramadan. The festival is called Eid al-Fitr.

People visit relatives and friends. They exchange gifts and cards. They give food to poor people.

Women decorate their hands with henna for Eid.



Islam

- Islam is a major world religion.
- Followers of Islam are called Muslims.
- The holy book for Muslims is the Qur'an (say: koh-RAHN).
- The symbol of Islam is a crescent moon and a star.



Many Muslims go to a mosque to pray.



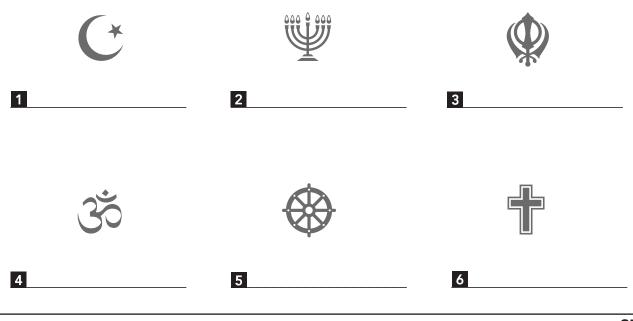
Sharif Senebel is an architect. He designed this mosque in Port Coquitlam.

- There are about 1.6 billion Muslims in the world.
- More than 1 million Muslims live in Canada.

Finish the chart				
Write the missing words to finish the chart.				
	World religions	Followers		
	Buddhism	Buddhists		
	Christianity			
	Hinduism			
	Islam			
	Judaism			
	Sikhism			

Religious symbols

Do you know these six religious symbols? Write the name of the religion under each symbol.



What's the word?

Draw a line under the correct word to finish each sentence.

- 1. Ramadan is an important day / month for Muslims.
- 2. During Ramadan, Muslims fast between dawn and sunset / midnight.
- 3. Muslims pray five times a day / night.
- 4. During Ramadan Muslims say fewer / extra prayers.
- 5. Eid is a festival at the end / beginning of Ramadan.
- 6. During Ramadan / Eid people visit friends and relatives.

Finish the sentences

Fill in the blanks with words from the boxes.

- 1. The symbol of Islam is a _____ moon and star.
- 2. The ______ book for Muslims is called the Qur'an.
- 3. Followers of ______ are called Muslims.

4. About 1 million Muslims live in _____.

5. There are more than 1.6 _____ Muslims in the world.

Ramadan	holy Islam	billion	crescent	eligion Canada
---------	---------------	---------	----------	-------------------

New Year's

People celebrate the new year in many ways. For example:

Canada

People stay up late on New Year's Eve, December 31. At midnight, they kiss and hug and make lots of noise.



Brazil

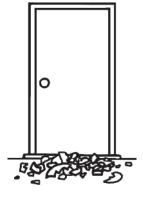
Brazilians eat lentils on New Year's Day, January 1. Lentils signify wealth.



Denmark

People throw old dishes at their friends' front doors. A big pile

of broken dishes means you have lots of friends.



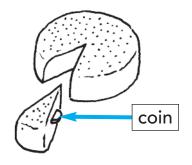
Puerto Rico

Children throw water out their windows to get rid of bad spirits.



Greece

Greeks eat a special cake called *vassilopita*. A coin is baked in the cake. The person who gets the slice with the coin will have good luck in the new year.



Spain

Spaniards eat 12 grapes at midnight. Each grape represents one month of happiness in the new year.





The Westcoast Reader 12/2008

27

New Year's traditions

There are many traditions at New Year's.

Toasts

People often make toasts on New Year's Eve, December 31. Toasts are a way to say "Good luck" or "Good health."

In English, people usually say, "Cheers." What do people say in other languages?

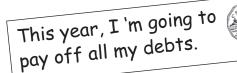


Can you match the toast with the language?

- 1. Salud a. French
- 2. Kanpai b. Spanish
- 3. Cin cin c. Italian
- 4. Santé d. Swedish
- 5. Skal e. Japanese

Resolutions

A popular tradition is to make resolutions for the new year. For example:





I plan to ride my bike to work three days a week.



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Finish the sentences

Fill in the missing words. Use the information on page 27.

1 Spaniards eat 12 ______ at midnight on New Year's Eve.

2. People throw old dishes at their friends' doors in ______.

- 3. Canadians kiss and ______ on New Year's Eve.
- 4. In Brazil, people eat ______ on New Year's Day.
- 5. *Vassilopita* is a special ______ Greeks eat at New Year's.

Nationality

This chart shows 6 countries and the nationality of the people in each country. Fill in the blanks to complete the chart.

	Country	Nationality
1.	Canada	
2.		Danish
3.	Greece	
4.	Spain	
5.		Puerto Rican
6.	Brazil	

29

Remembrance Day



A Remembrance Day ceremony

November 11 is Remembrance Day. We remember Canadians who died in wars. Many communities in Canada have special ceremonies on Remembrance Day.

Laying wreaths

Some cities and towns have cenotaphs to remember soldiers who died. People lay wreaths at cenotaphs on November 11.



Did you know?

Remembrance Day celebrates the end of the First World War. The war ended at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918.

Red poppies

During the First World War, more than 60,000 Canadian soldiers died. Many were buried in an area

of Europe called Flanders. Red poppies grew around their graves. Today, a red poppy is the symbol of Remembrance Day.



Veterans sell poppies

The Royal Canadian Legion sells plastic poppies for Remembrance Day. The legion uses the money to help veterans.



This veteran was a soldier in the Second World War.

Make a new word

Fill in the missing letters. Then take the circled letters and rearrange them to make a new word.

1.	A red flower			
2.	First,, third			
3.	Opposite of forget			
4.	Coins and bills			
5.	First War			
6.	Eleventh month			
Ne	New word from circled letters			

Correct the errors

There is one error in each sentence. Correct the errors.

- 1. Remembrance Day is on December 11.
- 2. People lay wreaths at doors on Remembrance Day.
- 3. The Second World War ended on November 11, 1918.
- 4. A purple poppy is the symbol of Remembrance Day.
- 5. More than 60,000 Mexican soldiers died during the First World War.
- 6. Many communities have special meals on Remembrance Day.

Lunar New Year -

Many people from Asia celebrate the Lunar New Year. In China, Lunar New Year is also called Spring Festival. Chinese families have many new year's traditions. For example:

People pay off their debts before the new year begins. They clean their homes and put up decorations.



Families get together for a special meal. Everyone enjoys lots of snacks and sweets.



Children receive money in little red envelopes. It is called *lai see* or "lucky money."



Some cities in Canada have parades for Lunar New Year.



Did you know?

Each year of the Chinese lunar calendar is named after one of 12 animals.

2019 is the Year of the Pig.



Look on page 10 of Word Games and Puzzles. You will find a puzzle with the animals of the Chinese zodiac.

The colour red

Draw a circle around the correct answer.

- What is inside the red envelopes children receive for Lunar New Year?

 a. money
 b. candy
 - c. toys
- 2. Which red flower is the symbol of Remembrance Day?
 - a. rose
 - b. tulip
 - c. poppy
- 3. This gemstone is red.
 - a. diamond
 - b. emerald
 - c. ruby

4. Which planet is called the "red planet"? a. Mars

- b. Jupiter
- c. Saturn
- 5. If you are red-faced, you are _____.
 a. depressed
 b. embarrassed
 c. tired
- 6. The Red River is in this Canadian province.
 - a. Manitoba
 - b. Nova Scotia
 - c. Alberta

True or false

Write T if the sentence is true. Write F if the sentence is false (not true).

- 1. In China, Lunar New Year is also called Spring Holiday.
- 2. People pay off their debts before the new year begins.
- 3. At Lunar New Year, everyone enjoys lots of snacks and sweets.
- 4. Seniors receive money in little red envelopes.
- 5. Some cities in Canada have parades for Lunar New Year.
- 6. 2019 is the Year of the Dragon.

Traditions

Many people have special traditions for holidays and celebrations. Traditions include customs or special ways of doing things.

Match the tradition with the holiday or celebration.

1. Lunar New Year	a. wear a red poppy
2. Thanksgiving	b. pay off debts
3. Diwali	c. go trick or treating
4. Hanukkah	d. cook a turkey
5. Valentine's Day	e. light small oil lamps
6. Easter	f. decorate eggs
7. Halloween	g. play a game with a dreidel
8. Remembrance Day	h. give chocolates to someone special

What about you?

What is your favourite holiday? How do you celebrate?

Answers for exercises

Cards (p 6)

- 1. birthday 2. wedding
- 3. graduation 4. Easter
- 5. Christmas 6. Valentine's Day

Thanksgiving (p 8)

Possible wording

- 1. It is the second Monday in October.
- 2. Family and friends have a big meal.
- 3. Turkey and pumpkin pie are popular
- at Thanksgiving.

Where do the words belong? (p 8)

months: October, May, July
food: turkey, pie, salad
days: Thursday, Monday, Sunday
family: sister, husband, uncle
meals: lunch, dinner, breakfast
holidays: Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving

Carve a jack-o-lantern (p 11)

5, 6, 2, 4, 1, 3

Same word has different meanings (p 11) 1e 2f 3d 4a 5c 6b

Finish the sentences (p 13)

1b 2b 3a 4b 5a 6a 7b 8a

Missing letters (p 13)

1. Diwali5. spring9. parade2. Sikh6. new10. sweet3. Hindu7. year11. celebrate4. Vaisakhi8. lamp12. April

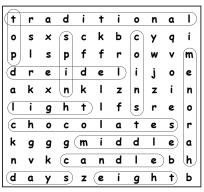
Finish the sentences (p 15)

1. statutory3. schools5. services2. Sunday4. holiday6. decorate

Scrambled eggs (p 15)

- bunny
 follow
- 2. business 4. cross

Find the words (p 17)



What word is missing? (p 17)

- 1. a4. called2. days5. play
- 3. Hanukkah 6. is

Which word does not belong? (p 19)

- 1. apple (It is not a flower.)
- 2. year (It is not a family member.)
- 3. Paris (It is not a country.)
- 4. holiday (It is not a season.)
- 5. winter (It is not a month.)
- 6. table (It is not a fruit.)

What's the right word? (p 19)

1. Iranians3. "haft seen"2. begins4. meaning

Choose the correct words (p 23)

wrap, exchange
 party, dinner
 cupcakes, cookies
 food, money
 a school, a church

Silent letters (p 23)

1t 2l 3w 4n 5l 6s 7h 8k 9b 10w 11p 12s 5. Iraq

Answers for exercises

Christianity Hinduism Islam	Buddhists Christians Hindus Muslims Jews	
Religious syn 1. Islam 4. Hinduism	2. Judaism	 3. Sikhism 6. Christianity
What's the way 1. month 2. sunset	3. day	5. end 6. Eid
1. crescent	1tences (p 26) 3. Islam 4. Canada	
Toasts Quiz (p 28) 1b 2e 3c 4a 5d		
1. grapes 2. Denmark	tences (p 29) 4. lentils 5. cake 6. water	
 Canada Denmark Greece Spain Puerto Rico 	Danish Greek Spaniard	
Make a new word (p 31)1. poppy4. money2. second5. World3. remember6. NovemberNew word: symbol		

Correct the errors (p 31)

December > November
 doors > cenotaphs
 Second > First
 purple > red
 Mexican > Canadian
 meals > ceremonies

The colour red (p 33)
1a 2c 3c 4a 5b 6a

True or false (p 33) 1F 2T 3T 4F 5T 6F

Traditions (p 34) 1b 2d 3e 4g 5h 6f 7c 8a