CHRISTMAS

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?"

Bob Hope (1903 - 2003), British-American comedian and actor

1. Christmas Discussion

1. Do people celebrate Christmas in your country? How do you feel about Christmas? Do you enjoy it? How is Christmas different to other times in the year?
2. What symbols and traditions do you associate with Christmas?
3. Do you have a special meal at Christmas time? If so, what are the traditional foods people eat?
4. Do people put decorations up at Christmas? If so, when do they put them up? When do they take them down? Are there any superstitions regarding bad luck when it comes to decorations?
5. Do you have lots of parties and celebrations at Christmas? How are they?
6. Who brings presents to children in your culture? Who do you give presents to at Christmas? What's the best present you have ever received for Christmas?
7. Are there any traditional films/movies that are shown at Christmas? Do you have a favourite?
8. When do you usually do your Christmas shopping? Does it make you stressed? Is Christmas in general very stressful?

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2. Christmas Vocabulary

- **Christmas Eve** (noun) - *the day before Christmas Day.*
- **white Christmas** (noun) - *when snow falls on Christmas Day, or during the Christmas period.*
- **Santa Claus / Father Christmas** (noun) - *a man with a white beard and wearing red clothes who traditionally brings presents to children for Christmas.*
- **stocking filler** (noun) - *a small Christmas present that can be placed inside a stocking.*
- **Christmas carol** (noun) - *a traditional song or hymn on the theme of Christmas, usually religious.*
- **Christmas card** (noun) - *a card sent to wish friends and family a merry Christmas.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):

1. If you misbehave, you'll go on _____ naughty list, and he won't bring you any presents.
2. Men across the world rush out to the shops on _____ to do their Christmas shopping.
3. Sarah said she won't send any _____ this year and will instead make a donation to charity.
4. Thanks to global warming, it is becoming increasingly rare to have a _____ in many countries.
5. There will be a concert in the church tomorrow night when the choir will sing _____.
6. We bought chocolates and small toys as _____ for the kids.

Christmas vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Do you do anything special on Christmas Eve?
2. Which foreign country would you most like celebrate a white Christmas in?
3. What do you know about Santa Claus/Father Christmas? Do you leave him a special gift for when he visits? Does he visit naughty children in your country?
4. What are some good stocking fillers?
5. Do you have a favourite Christmas carol? Which other Christmas songs do you like?
6. Do people send Christmas cards in your culture? Have you ever sent or received a Christmas card?

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3. Video: How To Have A British Christmas

You are going to watch a video by Anglophenia called "How to Have a British Christmas" which explains some of the differences between British and American Christmases.

Watch the video here: https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-christmas/

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. Where do British children put letters to Father Christmas?
   a) in the post *b) in the fireplace* *c) in the bin*
2. Where do American children hang Christmas stockings?
   a) around the fireplace *b) on the Christmas tree* *c) around their bed*
3. What drink do British people leave for Santa?
   a) milk *b) whisky* *c) brandy*
4. What is not contained in a Christmas cracker?
   a) cheese *b) a paper hat* *c) a bad joke*

Sentence completion

5. _____ of arguments at Christmas time are caused by trying to make people wear a paper hat.
6. The main dish on a British Christmas dinner is _____.
7. A chipolata is a type of pork _____.
8. Christmas pudding is soaked in _____ and then set on fire.

Short answer

9. Who gives a speech on Christmas Day?
10. What is the main activity that happens on Boxing Day?
11. What are pantomimes?
12. What will you have for the rest of the year if you don't take down Christmas decorations within 12 days of Christmas?

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4. Christmas Conversation Questions

1. Do you feel different about Christmas now compared to when you were a child?
2. Are there any special ceremonies or rituals that people do in your country at Christmas? Do you go to church?
3. How do you think non-Christians who live in predominantly Christian countries feel during Christmas?
4. What are the most important values of Christmas? What is the true meaning of Christmas?
5. What is the origin of Christmas? Do you think Christmas has lost its original religious meaning? Has it become too commercialised?
6. Many symbols associated with Christmas come from pre-Christian pagan cultures of Europe such as holly, ivy, red berries, mistletoe, and giving presents - does this matter to you?
7. If Christmas is based on the pagan winter solstice celebration, which involved feasts, drinking and celebrations, aren't we reverting back to its original meaning?
8. Why can Christmas be such a difficult time of year for some people?

5. Christmas Writing Task

Write about the traditions of Christmas. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- The origins of Christmas.
- Traditions associated with Christmas.
- Whether or not the true meaning of Christmas has been lost.

Alternative exam practice question:

These days, people have forgotten the true meaning of Christmas. Instead, they just want to give and receive gifts and celebrate in parties. What is the true meaning of Christmas? Why have people forgotten the true meaning?

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