

CELEBRATIONS

Coming Of Age

1. Warmer

In your country, how old must people be to do these things?

- get married
- vote
- drive a car
- buy alcohol
- sign a phone contract

2. Key words

a. Scan the four short texts to find and underline the key words.

b. Match the key words with their definitions.

c. Then read the texts again to see how they are used in context.

Texts a. & b.

accountable	ball gown	commandment	liberal
mass	participate	prayer shawl	tiara

1. the main religious ceremony of the Roman Catholic church _____
2. a special long dress usually worn at an event where there is dancing and often a meal _____
3. a piece of jewellery that a woman wears on top of her head that looks like a small crown _____
4. according to the Bible, one of the ten rules that God gave people to tell them how to behave and act _____
5. in a position where people have the right to criticise you or ask you why something happened _____
6. take part in something _____
7. a long, specially decorated piece of cloth that is worn over the shoulders for religious occasions _____
8. this word describes religions that allow people a lot of personal freedom _____

Texts c. & d.

character	filing	heirloom	prayers	purification
	responsible	symbolic	trust	

9. rubbing something down to make it smooth _____
10. the qualities that make up someone's personality _____

CELEBRATIONS

Coming Of Age

Worksheet

11. representing something important _____
12. a religious ceremony to make someone or something very clean _____
13. words that someone says when they are speaking to their god(s) _____
14. a valuable or special item that has belonged to a family for many years _____
15. sensible, reliable, and able to be trusted to do the right thing _____
16. be sure that someone is honest, fair, and reliable _____

CELEBRATIONS

Coming Of Age

Worksheet

a. Quinceañera

This is the celebration of a girl's fifteenth birthday. It is the most important celebration for girls in Mexico, Latin America, and on Caribbean islands such as Cuba. The celebration begins with a Catholic mass. Then there is a big party with food, cake, music and dancing. The girl (also called the quinceañera), wears a ball gown and a tiara. She chooses her closest friends to be part of the celebration with her.

At the celebration, the quinceañera gives a doll to her younger sister to show that she is no longer a child. Another tradition is the 'changing of the shoes' when her father changes the quinceañera's flat shoes for high heels to show that she is now a woman and not a girl.

b. Bar Mitzvah/Bat Mitzvah

When a Jewish boy has his 13th birthday, he is a bar mitzvah (Hebrew for son of the commandment). This means that he is accountable for what he does and that he may participate in all areas of Jewish life. Most families celebrate this very important birthday with a special ceremony.

Usually the boy reads from the Torah and gives a speech in the synagogue. He wears a prayer shawl called a *tallit*. Afterwards, there is a party for all the boy's family and friends. Liberal Jewish communities also celebrate a girl's bat mitzvah (Hebrew for daughter of the commandment) in a similar way.

c. Metatah

Every Balinese teenager must have a tooth filing ceremony, or Metatah ceremony.

In this ceremony, a Hindu priest files down six teeth to remove negative things from the teenager's character and to make them ready to be a good adult.

These days, the 'filing' is often symbolic and does not hurt the teenager or really cut their teeth.

The important and expensive tooth filing ceremony must be carried out before a Balinese person gets married. It shows that the teenager is now an adult.

The celebration includes purification ceremonies and special prayers.

d. Sweet sixteen

In the United States and Canada, sweet sixteen parties celebrate a girl's (or sometimes a boy's) 16th birthday. The celebration might be a small family party at home or a big expensive party in a hotel with hundreds of guests. This celebration shares some traditions with a quinceañera. At both celebrations, there is a father-daughter dance, the shoe ceremony, and at a sweet sixteen celebration, the birthday girl might be given a family heirloom such as a piece of jewellery. Sometimes she might even get her first car! As well as making the day special, these gifts show that the girl is responsible and that her parents can trust her.

CELEBRATIONS

Coming Of Age

3. Find the information

Answer the questions with the names of the celebrations.

Which celebrations:

1. are connected to birthdays? _____
2. just celebrate boys? _____
3. just celebrate girls? _____
4. have a strong religious element? _____
5. partly take place in a religious building? _____
6. are connected to one country? _____
7. share some of the same traditions? _____
8. must be done before a person gets married? _____

4. Using the key words

a. Use some of the words from task 2 to complete these sentences.

1. The shoe ceremony has a great _____ meaning for the teenage girl.
2. This evening's _____ will start at 6pm. Don't be late. The priest doesn't like it when people are late.
3. The diamond earrings she wore at her wedding were a family _____.
4. I like her, but I don't know if I can really _____ her to keep a secret.
5. The ceremony ended with special _____ for peace.
6. Parents are _____ for their young children.
7. Their views on marriage and divorce are very _____.
8. I'm going to _____ in a drug trial for a new medicine.

b. Now use these or some of the other key words in sentences of your own.

CELEBRATIONS

Coming Of Age

Worksheet

5. Discussion

Circle the most important birthday in your country or culture.

13 15 16 18 21 (other) ___

Talk about how this special birthday is celebrated.

Say:

- who is invited
- who pays
- where the celebration is held

Talk about

- special traditions
- presents
- food
- music
- clothes

Is there a special greeting that people say on this day?

e.g. Happy birthday congratulations: *mazel tov*