

# CELEBRATIONS

## Inti Raymi—The festival of the sun

### 1. Warmer

**a. Write your answers to these questions as quickly as possible.**

In your country:

When does winter begin? \_\_\_\_\_

When does summer begin? \_\_\_\_\_

What weather is typical for winter? \_\_\_\_\_

What weather is typical for summer? \_\_\_\_\_

When is the shortest day of the year? \_\_\_\_\_

When is the longest day of the year? \_\_\_\_\_

**b. Work in pairs and compare your answers.**

### 2. Key words and expressions

**Read the article about the history of *Inti Raymi*. Find the keywords defined below.**

1. announced something, or be a sign that something was going to happen soon \_\_\_\_\_
2. acts of killing a person or animal as part of a ceremony to honour a god or spirit \_\_\_\_\_
3. the day of the year when the sun is above the horizon for either the longest or shortest amount of time \_\_\_\_\_
4. protection and help offered by God, gods or a religious leader \_\_\_\_\_
5. spoke publicly to a group of people \_\_\_\_\_
6. the process of taking control of land or people during a war \_\_\_\_\_
7. completely different or opposed to something else \_\_\_\_\_
8. when something such as a play that has not been put on or seen recently is performed again \_\_\_\_\_

### INTI RAYMI – HISTORY

During the time of the Incan Empire, Inti Raymi was the greatest festival of the year. According to Inca tradition, the festival was created in 1412 by Pachacutec, the ninth and most powerful Incan Emperor who also built Machu Picchu, to celebrate the winter solstice which heralded the return of the sun, and the Incan New Year.

In the past, the festival included animal and human sacrifices which were meant to please the sun god Inti, who at the time of the winter solstice was as far away from the Earth as he could possibly be. The festival and sacrifices were performed to encourage Inti to return and shine warmly on the land so that crops could grow and the Incan people would have enough to eat.

Around 25,000 people gathered every year in Cusco in Peru, which was then the centre of the Incan Empire, to celebrate the festival which lasted for nine days. They painted their faces yellow like the sun, wore deer antlers, swept the main road and covered it with flowers before the Sapa Inca – the ruler of the Inca Empire – and his consort Mama Oclla were carried along it to the celebration ground. There, people danced and played music and priests gave blessings. On the fourth day, at the high point of the celebration, the Sapa Inca climbed a golden tower, offered a drink made from maize to the sun god, and addressed his people.

Inti Raymi was banned by the Spanish invaders during the Spanish conquest because they believed it was pagan and contrary to the Catholic faith.

The modern-day celebration of Inti Raymi was revived in 1944 and has been held every year since.

### 3. Comprehension check

Mark the statements true or false according to the history of Iti Raymi text.

Correct any that are false.

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1. The festival of Inti Raymi goes back over one thousand years.    | True / False |
| 2. The original Inti Raymi celebrations took place at Machu Picchu. | True / False |
| 3. The festival was celebrated by dancing, drinking, and killing.   | True / False |
| 4. The festival took place around the longest day of the year.      | True / False |
| 5. Inti was the name given by the Incas to the sun god.             | True / False |
| 6. Pachacutec was the first and greatest Sapa Inca.                 | True / False |

# CELEBRATIONS

## Inti Raymi—The festival of the sun

### 4. Find the information

Read the texts about how Inti Raymi is celebrated today in Peru and Ecuador. Then answer each question with P or E.

#### INTI RAYMI – in modern day Peru

The biggest Inti Raymi festival these days takes place every year on June 24<sup>th</sup> in the city of Cusco. It is the second biggest festival in South America, only the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro attracts more visitors. It is held on three natural stages: the temple of the sun, the town square, and the Fortress of Sacsayhuaman. Tickets for the festival cost upwards of 200 dollars and many tour operators offer package deals that include transport, accommodation and seats at the main stage. Local people and others who cannot afford the expensive tickets crowd the surrounding hills for a glimpse of the stage and the ceremony. The actors who are carefully chosen for the coveted main roles need to be able to speak the ancient Quechua language (which is still spoken today by about 4 million Peruvians). They wear elaborate costumes made with gold and silver ornaments, and feathered headdresses. The celebrations are similar to those of the ancient Incas, but today no sacrificial killing takes place. After the main celebration, the festivities continue in the town with street fairs, live music and dancing.

#### INTI RAYMI – in modern day Ecuador

Inti Raymi is also celebrated in Andean villages in Ecuador, Bolivia and Argentina as well as in Peru around the solstice. The celebrations in Otavalo in northern Ecuador, which last for days, have also become a popular tourist attraction despite being very different to those in Cusco, Peru.

Here the festival is centred around the mountain spirit named Aya Uma. He is said to scare off demons that might threaten the harvest. Aya Uma is played by an actor who wears a mask with two faces and twelve horns. He is accompanied around midnight to a sacred waterfall by dancers who dance in two circles that represent the two solstices each year. The dancers stamp their feet to music that represents the live-giving power of the sun, and offer gifts of fruit to Mother Earth (also called Pachamama) to encourage her to produce a good harvest.

Inti Raymi is a celebration of indigenous identity and in Otavalo people march proudly to the city central plaza waving the multi-coloured Whiphala flag, the symbol of the indigenous Andean culture across the whole of South America.

1. Which attracts the most visitors? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which festival takes place near water? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which involves a two-faced spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which celebration no longer includes sacrificial killing? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Which is centred around a tower and a fortress? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Which involves waving a multicoloured flag? \_\_\_\_\_

# CELEBRATIONS

## Inti Raymi—The festival of the sun

### 5. Videos: speaking

**a. Watch this video of Inti Raymi in Ecuador. Make notes on how it is narrated and how written text is used.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6\\_O6P-vtqKo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_O6P-vtqKo)

**b. Watch this video of Inti Raymi festival in Peru. Narrate the video, explaining in real time what you see.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSv0W\\_KBlqg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSv0W_KBlqg)

**c. Drawing on the information from the texts on this worksheet and the videos you have watched, talk about the two different Inti Raymi celebrations.**

- Say how the festivals in Peru and Ecuador are similar and different.
- Say where you would like to experience the Inti Raymi festival: in Peru or Ecuador.

### 6. Discussion

**Answer the questions in pairs or groups.**

Are the summer or winter solstices celebrated in your country?  
If yes, how, where and by whom?

Have you heard of any other sun festivals or solstice festivals?  
What do you know about them?

Have you ever attended a sun festival or a summer or winter solstice festival?  
If yes, talk about it.  
If no, could you imagine ever doing so?

Do people in your country generally look forward to (and maybe also celebrate) the arrival of the sun, or the start of the rain?  
If yes, say why.