

# CELEBRATIONS

## Special occasions

Teacher's notes

**Age:** Teenagers/Adults  
**Level:** Intermediate (B1)  
**Time:** 45 minutes +



**Activity:** In this lesson, students will:

1. read about special days and holidays;
2. practise writing and saying dates;
3. discuss celebrations around the world;
4. write about a special day.

**Language focus:** ways of saying dates; words associated with special days

**Preparation:** look up the dates of the variable special days (Ramadan, Chinese New Year, etc.) in advance of the lesson, if necessary

**Materials:** one copy of the worksheet per student

### Procedure

1. Ask students what the date is and write it on the board. Write further dates on the board as numbers and practise saying them in full. End with 25/12 – the twenty-fifth of December. Ask students, *What's special about this day?* (It's Christmas Day.)
2. If your students are confident about the names of dates and holidays, hand out the worksheet. Students read the texts about important dates in the year and write the name and date of the holiday below each one. If they need help, they can find the names at the bottom of the page.



**TEACHING TIP 1:** If your students are less confident, or if you want to revise vocabulary, write the names of the days and holidays on the board. Check students understand the vocabulary and drill pronunciation. Test their knowledge by eliciting words associated with each holiday and write them on the board. Then, hand out the worksheet.

When they have finished, students check their answers with a partner.

#### Key:

1. New Year's Eve; 2. Halloween; 3. St Patrick's Day;
4. US Independence Day; 5. Ramadan; 6. Earth Day;
7. Remembrance Day; 8. Chinese New Year; 9. Martin Luther King, Jr Day; 10. Thanksgiving; 11. Valentine's Day; 12. Rosh Hashanah

3. Students continue to work in pairs and use their general knowledge or clues in the texts to write the dates of each holiday on the worksheet. Explain that in some cases the date is variable. If students find this difficult, write the dates on the board to help them. When they are finished, check answers as a class.

#### Key:

1. December 31; 2. October 31; 3. March 17; 4. July 4;
5. variable; 6. April 22; 7. November 11; 8. variable;
9. variable; 10. variable; 11. February 14; 12. variable

4. Students work in groups of three. They find out the birthdays of the classmates in their group and then ask them further questions to find out three birthday facts. You could write some example questions on the board, if students get stuck, like, *How did you celebrate your last birthday? Do you know anyone else with the same birthday as you?*
5. Ask students if they celebrate any of the special days and holidays they've read about so far where they live. Find out from students if they celebrate other special days and holidays, or if they know of other days celebrated across the world.
6. Ask students to research a special day or holiday online and write a short description. Tell them they can find out more about one of the days already discussed, but they must find out new facts. When they are finished, ask each student to read their description to the class, and ask the others to identify which day it is.



**TECH TIP 1:** If you don't have access to a computer lab or laptops in the classroom, ask your students to work on their smartphones or tablets. Students that don't have a smartphone can work in pairs with someone who does. You could alternatively set this task as homework – students can find out information from the internet or they could ask friends or family. Then they could either send you the written report to check, or you could use the student presentations to help revise/recap vocabulary in your next lesson.