

The Origins of Easter Traditions (a worksheet)

Activity 1

Discuss with your partner.

1. Do you celebrate Easter?
2. What is your favourite Easter tradition?
3. Do you know any Easter traditions from other countries?
4. Do you know the origins of any Easter traditions?

Activity 2

Match the words and the definitions.

stroll		a slow relaxed walk for pleasure
penance		
nest		an act that shows that you feel sorry about something that you have done, sometimes for religious reasons:
fasting		
jelly bean		a period of time when you eat no food:
bonnet		
resurrection		Jesus Christ's return to life

Activity 3

Match the paragraphs and the headings.

Easter Bunny

Easter Eggs

Easter Candy

Easter Parade

The Bible makes no mention of a long-eared, short-tailed creature who delivers decorated eggs to well-behaved children on Easter Sunday; nevertheless, it has become a prominent symbol of Christianity's most important holiday. Although the exact origins of this mythical mammal are unclear, this prolific procreator is an ancient symbol of fertility and new life.

In New York City, this tradition dates back to the mid-1800s, when the upper crust of society would attend Easter services at various Fifth Avenue churches then stroll outside afterward, showing off their new spring outfits and hats. Average citizens started showing up along Fifth Avenue to check out the action.

This tradition dates back to at least the 13th century, according to some sources. One explanation for this custom is that this was formerly a forbidden food during the Lenten season.

Each one is painted and decorated to mark the end of the period of penance and fasting, then eaten on Easter as a celebration.

According to some sources this tradition first arrived in America in the 1700s with German immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania. Eventually, the custom spread across the U.S. Easter morning deliveries of expanded to include chocolate and other types of candy and gifts.

The tradition reached its peak by the mid-20th century, and in 1948, a popular film of the same name was released, starring Fred Astaire and Judy Garland and featuring the music of Irving Berlin. This tradition lives on in Manhattan, with Fifth Avenue from 49th Street to 57th Street being shut down during the day to traffic. Participants often sport elaborately decorated bonnets and hats.

Among the most popular sweet treats associated with this day are chocolate eggs, which date back to early 19th century Europe. Eggs have long been associated with Easter as a symbol of new life and Jesus' resurrection. Another egg-shaped candy, the jelly bean, became associated with Easter in the 1930s.

Adapted from "[Easter Symbols and Traditions](#)"

Activity 4

Correct the mistakes in these sentences.

1. During the Easter parade in mid-1800s people of all classes and backgrounds march together through the streets of New York.
2. Jelly beans have been forbidden food during Lent for centuries
3. The traditional Easter bunny originates from Pennsylvania.
4. Among the most popular sweet treats associated with this day are jelly beans, which date back to early 19th century Europe.
5. Participants of the Easter Parade often sport elaborately decorated baskets.

Activity 5

Watch the [video](#) and fill in the chart.

Tradition	Origin
Easter is always celebrated on Sunday	
Christians light Paschal candle	
The White House opens its lawn to children	
Children make nests	

Activity 6

Debate with your partner.

Is it OK for Easter to have non-religious traditions such as bunnies, chocolate eggs, jelly beans, etc.?

