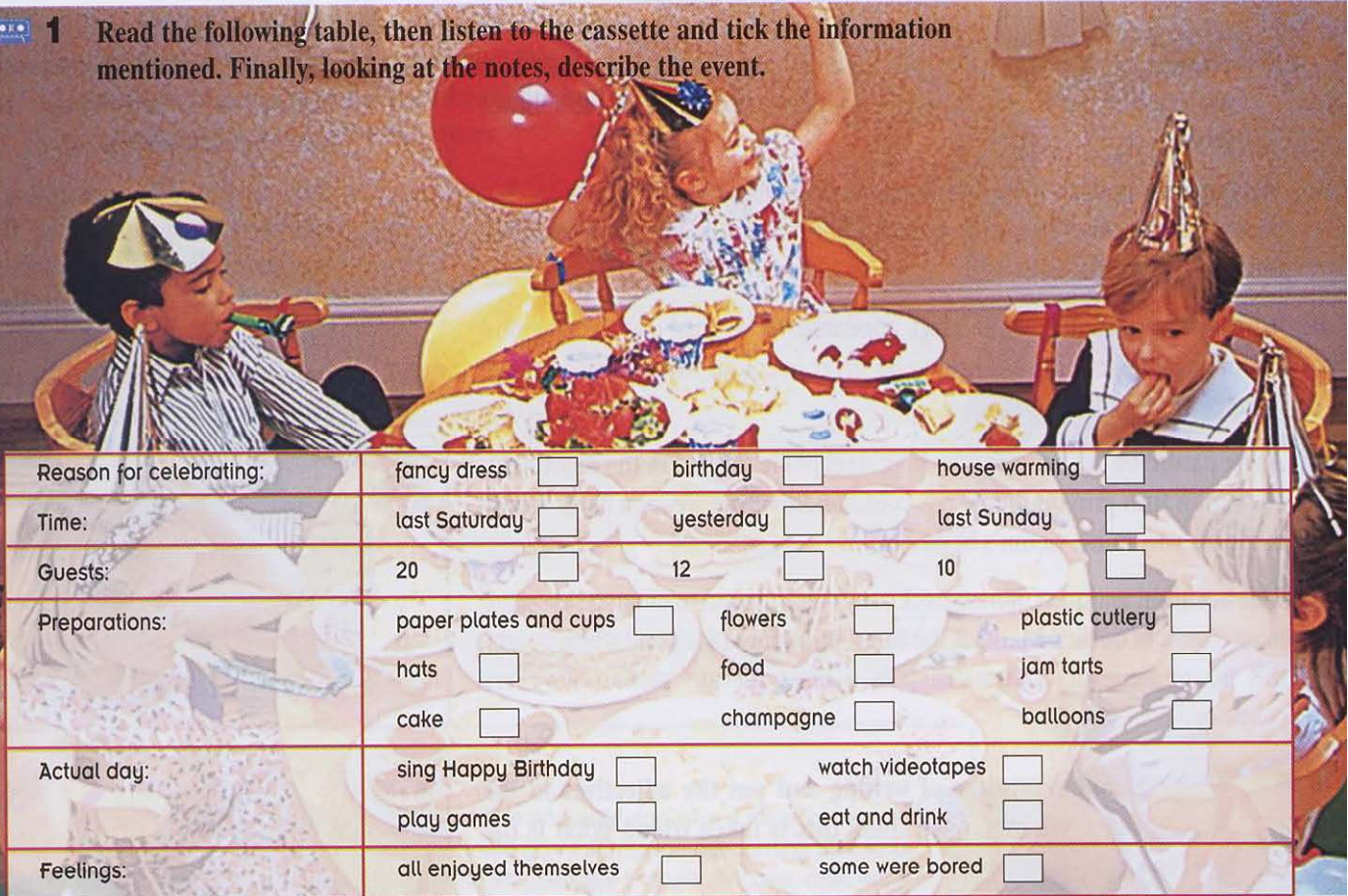


UNIT 4 Describing Festivals/Ceremonies/Celebrations

1 Read the following table, then listen to the cassette and tick the information mentioned. Finally, looking at the notes, describe the event.



Reason for celebrating:	fancy dress <input type="checkbox"/>	birthday <input type="checkbox"/>	house warming <input type="checkbox"/>
Time:	last Saturday <input type="checkbox"/>	yesterday <input type="checkbox"/>	last Sunday <input type="checkbox"/>
Guests:	20 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>
Preparations:	paper plates and cups <input type="checkbox"/>	flowers <input type="checkbox"/>	plastic cutlery <input type="checkbox"/>
	hats <input type="checkbox"/>	food <input type="checkbox"/>	jam tarts <input type="checkbox"/>
	cake <input type="checkbox"/>	champagne <input type="checkbox"/>	balloons <input type="checkbox"/>
Actual day:	sing Happy Birthday <input type="checkbox"/>	watch videotapes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	play games <input type="checkbox"/>	eat and drink <input type="checkbox"/>	
Feelings:	all enjoyed themselves <input type="checkbox"/>	some were bored <input type="checkbox"/>	

- A descriptive composition about an event should consist of:
 - a) an **introduction** in which you set the scene, mentioning the name/type, time, place and reason for celebrating this event;
 - b) a **main body** in which you describe the preparations and the actual event; and
 - c) a **conclusion** in which you describe people's feelings or comments on the event.

Such pieces of writing can be found in magazines, newspapers or travel brochures, or as part of letters, stories, etc.

Points to consider

- When you describe annual events (*e.g. a carnival/festival which takes place every year*) you should use present tenses. However, if the event is related to the past (*e.g. the carnival/festival you attended last year*), you should use past tenses. The passive is frequently used to describe the preparations or activities which take place. *e.g. Presents were wrapped in colourful paper and put under the Christmas tree.*
- To make your description more vivid, narrative techniques and a variety of descriptive adjectives can be used to set the scene and describe the atmosphere. *e.g. During the carnival, onlookers line the **crowded** streets, **clapping and cheering** as they watch the **brightly coloured** floats and **exotically dressed** dancers go by as the **sound** of traditional Caribbean music fills the air.*

Introduction

Paragraph 1

set the scene (name, time, place of event, reason(s) for celebrating)

Main Body

Paragraph 2

preparations (decorations, rehearsals, etc.)

Paragraph 3

description of the actual event (costumes, food, activities, etc.)

Conclusion

Final Paragraph

feelings, comments, final thoughts

2 Read the model below and write down the topic of each paragraph. What kind of event is being described? Why has the writer used present tenses? Are there similar events in your country?



Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day takes place in Britain every year on the Sunday closest to November 11th. It is held to remember all those who died while fighting in World Wars I and II.

Prior to the actual event, many schools and organisations rehearse for the parades which will be held on the day. Paper poppies are sold to the public, and they wear them in their lapels for a week or so before the event. The poppy flower, due to its bright red colour, is used to symbolise the blood shed by the soldiers during the war.

On the actual day, war veterans join the parades, proudly displaying their medals, and they march or are pushed in wheelchairs down the streets to the cheers of the crowds. In the evening there is always a remembrance service, held at the Royal Albert Hall in London, which is televised live. Hymns are sung, speeches are made, and at the end of the service, thousands of poppies are dropped from the ceiling onto the audience below.

Remembrance Day is a very important event. We should respect and feel proud of those people who died fighting in the wars as they played a very significant role in securing our country's freedom.

3 Form adjectives from the words below and list them in the correct columns. Remember that the spelling of some words may change.

beauty - joy - glory - colour - nation - marvel - magic - wonder - origin - tradition - excite - entertain - stir - luxury - glitter - sparkle - plenty

- ful	-ous	-al	-ing
beautiful			

4 Fill in the gaps with one of the words from the list below.

medals, commemorate, memorial service, parade, traditional costumes, wreath, national anthem, 21-gun salute, veteran, two-minute silence

- The will be held at the Royal Albert Hall.
- Someone who has fought in and survived a war is called a war
- The audience sang the at the beginning of the ceremony.
- The festival was held to fifty years of peace.
- The Queen laid a at the foot of the war memorial.
- The crowd lined the streets to watch the soldiers marching in the
- It is customary for a to be fired at the end of the ceremony.
- A is observed throughout the country as a sign of respect for the people who died in the war.
- In keeping with the theme of the festival, everyone involved wore
- The veterans proudly displayed their as they marched down the street.



5 Read the model below and put the paragraphs in the right order, then write down the topic of each paragraph.

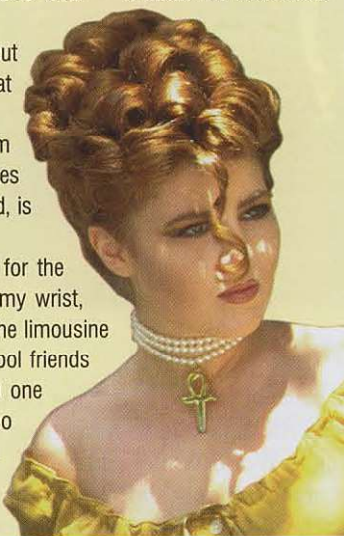
“Prom Night”

A I had been preparing for the prom for months, especially because I was a member of the Prom Committee. We booked an elegant hotel ballroom, had tickets printed, and arranged for a catering company to supply food and refreshments. Four committee members were in charge of the decorations, which reflected the theme of our prom, “Caribbean Moonlight”. Two months before the actual night, I found the perfect dress to wear — it made me look like a princess!

B When I finally returned home, I was tired but extremely happy. It had been a wonderful night, one that would give me pleasant memories for the rest of my life.

C My high school prom took place on a warm evening in May in a hotel ballroom. The event, which celebrates both the end of high school and the beginning of adulthood, is something every American teenager looks forward to.

D My parents took pictures of me before I left for the prom. I had a delicate corsage of beautiful orchids on my wrist, without which, my outfit would have been incomplete. The limousine waiting outside took me to the Grand Hotel. All my school friends were there. Together we danced, ate and laughed until one o’clock. I had never stayed out so late before, or had so much fun. My best friend was crowned Prom Queen. We were all very happy for her, if a little jealous, as we watched her dance with the Prom King.



6 Rewrite the following short paragraphs in the passive. What tenses are used? Why?



May Day

We cut flowers to make garlands. Others put up the maypole and tie streamers to the top. People decorate floats for the parade. Local bakeries prepare food for the spectators.

.....

New Year’s Eve

People send out party invitations and buy new outfits. They hang decorations and banners and prepare food. As the clock strikes twelve they open bottles of champagne and make a toast.



.....

7 Use of sophisticated adjectives when describing events makes your description more vivid. Read the short texts and fill in the gaps with the adjectives given.

a) Birthday Party

joyful - sparkling - spacious

The 1), brightly decorated room had a festive atmosphere. The light from the candles on the cake was reflected in the 2) eyes of the children. Their 3) faces showed their happiness as their parents looked on proudly.

b) Music Festival

spellbound - magical - blinding

1) lights lit up the stage as the band walked on. The lead singer sang a 2) love song and the audience sat 3) until the end, then burst into applause.

c) Beer Festival

dazzling - enthusiastic - traditional



The beer festival was officially opened as the band played 1) songs. The 2) crowd cheered with excitement and the sky was illuminated with 3) fireworks.

- 8** Read the model about *the Rio Carnival* and replace the adjectives in bold with others from the list. Can you think of other adjectives to be used in their place? Give the paragraph plan. What tenses have been used? Why? Now, write a description of this festival as if you had participated in it. How is your description different from the model below?

brightly coloured, most spectacular, thrilling, huge, grand, numerous, lively, most impressive

Every year, for the last few days before the forty-day fasting period of Lent, which usually starts at the end of February, visitors from all over the world gather in Rio de Janeiro to witness the **1) nicest** festival in the world – the Rio Carnival.

Preparations for the **2) big** occasion begin months in advance. **3) Nice** costumes are designed and sewn, bands practise their **4) nice** music and ambitious dancers spend hours perfecting their samba routines.

The main part of the carnival takes place in the Sambadrome, a **5) big** stadium where the exotically dressed dancers of **6) many** samba schools compete for prizes awarded for the **7) best** performance and costumes. Outside the stadium, enthusiastic revellers all over the city dance their way through the world's noisiest street party, which continues until the very end of the carnival.

Everyone has fun at the Rio Carnival. The whole city and its hundreds of thousands of visitors look forward to this **8) nice** event every year.



- 9** Read the model and correct the mistakes. Write **S** for spelling, **WO** for word order, **G** for grammar, **P** for punctuation or **WW** for wrong word. What is the topic of each paragraph? What tenses have been used?

A Wedding I'll Never Forget

S forgotten

Sally's wedding day in the local church last July was one not to be **forgoten**.

The last weeks had been a whirl of **bookings dress fittings invitations** to be sent, flowers and food to be organised, finding a **correct** place for the reception – the list seemed endless. But somehow **had everything** been done **on** time.

All we gasped when the gleaming, flower-decorated cars **turnt** into the square and **puled up smooth** outside the door of the church. **The father of Sally**, smiling proudly, helped Sally out of the car. She emerged, graceful as a swan, in her romantic white dress. The two little bridesmaids in pink grabbed at the floating veil as the breeze tried to pull it away from them. John smiled **hotly** as Sally **come** to stand **beside to** him. How happy they looked! The service was simple, beautiful and moving. **Sallys** mother couldn't keep back her tears when the couple exchanged their vows.

After the photographs **had taken** we all drove off to the reception, **which it** was held at a local hotel. **a** delicious dinner was served, toasts were proposed and we all danced far into the night, even after the newlyweds **drove** away to start their honeymoon.

What an exciting day it had been!

- 10** Write one of the topics below in the appropriate style using 120 - 180 words.

- 1 An international teenagers' magazine is asking its readers to send descriptions of an important festival in their country. Choose a festival and write your description.
- 2 Write a description of a national celebration which you have attended.
- 3 A magazine has asked its readers to submit descriptions of a typical wedding in their country. Write your description for the competition.
- 4 Your teacher has asked you to describe a birthday party you recently attended. Write your description for your teacher.