

Reading Comprehension Practice

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Which Ukrainian festival or celebration would you suggest foreigners take part in? Why?
- What other festivals or celebrations around the world do you know about?

A Read the texts below. Match choices (A-H) to (1-6). There are two choices you do not need to use.

1 Indian Holi Festival

The Indian Holi Festival celebrates the victory of good over evil and also marks the arrival of spring. It's an extremely lively two-day event and is also called the Festival of Colour. The evening before Holi, there are bonfires around which people sing and dance. The next day, people gather outdoors in the streets and throw coloured powder and water over each other. At home, families decorate their houses, exchange gifts and eat special food.



4 Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival

Accounts differ as to how Taiwan's breathtaking Sky Lantern Festival began. Some say villagers who worked in the mountains used the lanterns to inform their families they were safe and others say that they were used to transmit military information. Whatever the case, today thousands of people buy a lantern, write their wishes on the paper, light the candle and watch as the lantern flows into the night sky, carrying their expectations for a bright future.



5 Viking Fire Festival

On the last Tuesday of January, the Viking Fire Festival takes place in Lerwick, Shetland – this is the island in the northernmost corner of Scotland. Scots and visitors celebrate the winter's end and the sun's return with blazing fire. Shetlanders also commemorate the Vikings who ruled there for 500 years, more than a thousand years ago. Having spent months building a dragon ship, the Shetlanders then set it on fire, while crowds sing and dance.



2 Ivan Kupala Festival

Like other European nations, Ukraine celebrates the summer solstice, which is the longest day of the year. Since the 4th century CE, this day has been connected with the Christian religion and the birth of John the Baptist. Today, the Ivan Kupala festival is a popular event for people of all ages. Fire, water and greenery play an important role in the day's various customs, one of which is jumping over a bonfire for good fortune.



6 Palio di Siena Festival

Siena's famous horse event is of medieval origin. It has been held twice a year since 1701, except during times of war. The festival lasts for four days, and its main event is the historical horse race. Crowds of tourists and locals gather in the city's main square, Piazza del Campo, to see ten jockeys ride their horses without a saddle in a one-minute race. There are parades, open-air dinners and other events that local people prepare all year round.



3 Day of the Dead Festival

This festival, which originated in Mexico but is popular throughout Latin America, celebrates death as well as life. It is held on 1 and 2 November, when the dead are believed to travel back to earth and the living should welcome them by offering food and drinks. Photos and candles feature significantly to show respect for family members who are no longer alive. People wear impressive costumes and make-up, and have colourful parades in the streets.



Which of the festivals _____?

- A. celebrates the people who conquered the land in the past
- B. features plants among other elements of nature
- C. is organised by people who wish to **protest** against war
- D. includes both outdoor and indoor celebrations
- E. has more than one tale of origin
- F. is a chance to lovingly remember relatives who passed away
- G. includes offering a paper gift to a stranger
- H. has a competitive nature



Reading Comprehension Practice

VOCABULARY BOOSTER

A1 Look at the highlighted word in choice C on page 64. What other prepositions can the verb *protest* be followed by?

When dealing with adjectives/nouns/verbs + prepositions, be careful of the change in meaning when a different preposition is used with the same word, e.g. *translate from* vs *translate into*.

A2 Complete the sentences with the prepositions *about, for, of, on* or *with*.

VERBS + PREPOSITIONS

1. They **blame** Christopher _____ the damage to the window.
2. I **blame** her lack of affection for her family _____ her difficult childhood.
3. The school needs you to **provide** them _____ all the necessary paperwork for Mark's enrolment.
4. Our neighbourhood can **provide** a safe environment _____ your children.
5. Don't forget to **remind** Cara _____ dinner on Sunday.
6. His smile **reminds** me _____ his grandfather.

VOCABULARY BOOSTER

B1 Look at the highlighted phrase in the text on page 65. What role does the adverb *absolutely* play?

INTENSIFYING AND SOFTENING ADVERBS

B2 Choose the correct adverb in each sentence, depending on whether you need to strengthen or weaken the intensity of the adjective that follows.

1. I'm **very / slightly / completely** better now that I've started taking the medicine, but I'm still in pain.
2. We were **highly / partly / utterly** shocked when they announced their engagement after knowing each other for such a short time.
3. The dress was **almost / deeply / totally** perfect, but it was a little shorter than what I wanted.
4. Their son is not answering his phone, and it's making them **fully / bitterly / increasingly** anxious because they don't know if his battery has died or if he's hurt.
5. The article looks **absolutely / fairly / nearly** accurate, but we should still check if the details are correct.
6. I'm **terribly / rather / certainly** sorry for spilling my drink on you. Please let me help you clean up.
7. We can't buy that; it's **greatly / fairly / ridiculously** expensive for a coffee machine. What about this one?
8. He was **strongly / entirely / bitterly** disappointed when he realised they hadn't picked him for the basketball team.