

festivals and special days

Lesson 1

1 Ask and answer

How do you know when it is the start of spring?

OBJECTIVES

- **Grammar** Present and past simple passive
- **Reading** Reading a website article about a festival
- **Listening** Listening to a description of a festival
- **Speaking** Sequencing events in a festival
- **Writing** Writing an email about a special day

2 Match the words and their definitions

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> celebrate | a an important day with lots of activities |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> festival | b without having to pay any money |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> free | c better or more important than usual |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> special | d be a sign for something |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> represent | e enjoy activities on an important day |



3 Read the website article and check your answers to exercise 1

Spring festivals

Spring is **celebrated** in different ways all over the world. It is a very **special** time of the year. In Egypt, Sham el-Nessim was first held to celebrate the start of spring nearly 4,000 years ago.

In Japan, people celebrate when small flowers first appear on thousands of trees across the country. People go outside and have picnics under the trees with their friends and family.

In the town of Zenica in Bosnia, people have a **festival** of eggs in spring. Hundreds of eggs are cooked in a big pan for breakfast and these are given to all the people of the town for **free**.

In Australia, the start of spring is celebrated in September! In the city of Canberra, there is a month-long flower festival to celebrate spring. You can see about a million beautiful flowers in the city main park, and you can also listen to music.

Why do so many countries celebrate spring? The flowers and eggs all **represent** the new life that we can start to enjoy after the winter months have ended.

4 Answer the questions

- 1 When do people in Japan start to celebrate spring?
- 2 What do they do to celebrate, and who do they do it with?
- 3 Do people have to buy breakfast at Bosnia's festival of eggs? Why? / Why not?
- 4 What can you see and do at the flower festival in Australia?



1 Underline the passive verbs in these sentences

- 1 Spring is celebrated in different ways all over the world
- 2 Sham el-Nessim was first held to celebrate the start of spring nearly 4,000 years ago
- 3 Hundreds of eggs are cooked in a big pan
- 4 In Australia, the start of spring is celebrated in September

GRAMMAR BOX

Present and past simple passive

- We use the passive when we don't know the subject of a sentence, or when the action is more important than the subject / person who does it. We can also use *by* + noun to talk about the person or thing that does the action.
- The form of the present simple passive is *am / is / are* + (not) + past participle.
In Bosnia, the people cook eggs in a big pan. (active)
In Bosnia, eggs are cooked in a big pan. (passive)
- The form of the past simple passive is *was / were* + (not) + past participle.
I didn't send the email. (active) *The email wasn't sent. (passive)*
- To make Yes / No questions, the form is *am / is / are / was / were* + noun (or pronoun) + past participle.
Are special foods eaten at the festival? Yes, they are
This toy is fantastic. Was it made in Egypt? Yes, it was
- Question words come before the verb *be* (*am / is / are / was / were*).
Why is fish sometimes kept in special freezers?
How was fish cooked in the past?

2 Make questions and answers in the present or past simple passive

- 1 Who / first pizza / invent by? *Who was the first pizza invented by?*
The first pizza / invent / by an Italian.
- 2 Where / Sham el-Nessim / celebrate today?
It / celebrate / all over the country
- 3 What / papyrus / first use for / long ago?
It / use for paper / by the ancient Egyptians.
- 4 What often / give / to children at New Year today?
Sweets / give / to children.



In our family,
Mother's Day is always
celebrated.



Workbook page 7

3 Ask and answer

- 1 What special days are celebrated by your family?
- 2 Are there any festivals that are celebrated in your city / village or school?

Lesson 3

1 Ask and answer

What is your favourite festival of the year?

2 Match these sentences about Chinese New Year with the pictures

- There are **parades**, where people wear colourful **costumes**.
- At 12 o'clock, there are fireworks and the sky is filled with colours. It's very noisy!
- We **decorate** our homes with red paper **lanterns**.

a



b



c



3 Listen to Li describing Chinese New Year. Who do young people visit on the first day of the new year?

4 Listen again. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- Chinese New Year is an important festival in China.
- After the houses are decorated, they are cleaned.
- New Year's dinner is usually fish.
- The red envelopes that children are given contain messages.
- The first thing that happens on New Year's Day is fireworks.
- At midday, there are parades.

5 Work in pairs

- Think of a special day that you celebrate or have celebrated.
- Describe and order the events on that day for your partner.

First of all, we go shopping for special food.



FUNCTIONS BOX

Using sequencing words

First of all, (we clean our houses).

Next, (we decorate our homes).

Afterwards, (many people go shopping).

After / Before / At (dinner, children are given envelopes).

At midnight / midday (there are fireworks).

The next day / morning / afternoon, (we wear our new clothes).

Internet search →

Find out which countries celebrate the longest day of the year, and what they do on this day.

SHAM EL-NESSIM



Sham el-Nessim means smelling the breeze and it is celebrated all over Egypt on a Monday in April or May. The festival started in about 2700 BCE. The ancient Egyptian year had three seasons and Sham el-Nessim was held to celebrate the start of spring. Sham el-Nessim isn't celebrated in any other country.



- Today, Sham el-Nessim is a holiday and families go out to enjoy the fresh spring air. The spring air is very good for you! People often have a picnic in the country, in parks or along the Nile.
- Special food is eaten at Sham el-Nessim. Traditionally, boiled eggs are eaten for breakfast. Eggs are decorated in bright colours by children. They usually paint the eggs in the morning and leave them in the sun to dry.

- Another traditional food which is eaten on this day is *feseekh*: fish that is dried with salt. This tradition also dates back to ancient Egyptian times. When people had more fresh fish than they could eat, they put salt on it to preserve it.
- It is important to buy *feseekh* from a clean shop so that you are sure that the fish will be good for you.

1 Answer the questions about the words in red in the text.

- 1 Is a breeze a strong wind or a weak wind?
- 2 If you preserve something, does it last a long time or a short time?
- 3 If something is traditional, has it been done for a long or short period of time?

2 Answer these questions.

- 1 Why and when did the festival of Sham el-Nessim first start?
- 2 How is Sham el-Nessim celebrated by most people these days?
- 3 Why did people first eat dried fish?
- 4 Why should you buy *feseekh* from a clean shop?



- 1 How was Sham el-Nessim celebrated by your family last year?
- 2 Which other times of the year do you think are important? Why?
- 3 Why do you think tourists like to visit a country when there is a festival?



Review

Now you can ...

• talk about special days

1 Complete the sentences

breeze celebrate costumes decorate festival parade

- 1 My favourite *festival* is Eid al-Fitr. It is held to _____ the end of Ramadan.
- 2 At some festivals, children join a _____ and wear colourful _____.
- 3 When we _____ eggs for Sharm el-Nessim, we try to use natural colours from plants.
- 4 When we stood on the beach, we could feel a _____ blowing from the sea.

• use the present and past simple passive correctly

2 Write the sentences using the correct form of the passive

- 1 Who invented fireworks? *Who were fireworks invented by?*
- 2 How do people celebrate New Year in China?
- 3 The children made their wonderful costumes.
- 4 Thousands of people watch the parade every year.
- 5 My parents gave me new clothes for Eid al-Fitr.
- 6 Why do people preserve fish?



• use sequencing words

3 Complete the sentences

Afterwards
At Before
First of all
The next
After

- 1 *First of all*, the two-day festival is opened by Mr Sergany at 9 a.m.
- 2 _____ there is an art competition. 3 _____ midday, lunch is served
- 4 _____ lunch, there is a children's sports competition. 5 _____
- morning, you can look at and buy crafts. 6 _____ Mr Sergany closes
- the festival at 1 p.m., you can listen to some traditional music

Writing skills

A good piece of writing always ends with a conclusion (a closing sentence). You can use the following expressions:

To conclude, this is one of the most important festivals of the year.

To summarise, festivals are very important for everyone in Egypt.

In conclusion, there are many festivals that we can enjoy in Egypt.