

Christmas - a global phenomenon?

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Activity 1

Read the following questions and use them to begin a conversation with your partner.

1. Do you have to be a Christian to celebrate Christmas these days? What do people of other religions living in Christian countries do at Christmas time?
2. When you think of Christmas who do you think of first: Father Christmas or Jesus Christ? Why?
3. Christmas is the biggest festival in the Christian calendar; what are the biggest festivals in the calendars of other religions? Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ; what do the festivals of other religions celebrate? How do people celebrate these festivals?
4. The religious festivals of other religions don't seem to be as commercialized as Christmas; why do you think this is?
5. Some people start preparing for Christmas earlier and earlier every year; other people think we should 'keep Christmas in December'. Do you agree with this slogan? Why?
6. Do you think people around the world think of Christmas as mainly a religious celebration, a time for families to get together, a winter break, or just an opportunity to go shopping? Give reasons for your answer.
7. Do you think an internationally 'famous' celebration like Christmas can help to bring people around the world together and promote world peace or do celebrations like this just emphasise our differences? Explain your answer to your partner.

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Activity 2

*Do you think people have to be Christian to celebrate Christmas? Go to the Forum at **EnglishClub.com** and post your opinion there. Find 5 people who agree with you. Do they agree with you for the same reasons?*

Activity 3

*Go to the Forum at **EnglishClub.com** and find five people who disagree with you. Why do they disagree?*

Activity 4

*Conduct a survey on the Forum at **EnglishClub.com**: Do people in general think that you have to be Christian to celebrate Christmas? Report your findings back to your class. Are the results of your survey to those of the other students?*

Activity 5

Have you ever seen the film or read the book (by Charles Dickens) 'A Christmas Carol'? This film is about a man who discovers the real meaning of Christmas. Why not try to see it or read it in English? According to the film/book what is the real meaning of Christmas?

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