

Student Worksheet

Task 2 – Multi-text Reading:
National Customs

ISE II Reading practice

Part 1

Text A

Wedding Customs

(Insert image of wedding)

There are a great number of traditional wedding customs across the world and they are all equally fascinating. Of course, not everyone follows them nowadays but it is interesting to learn about them.

In England, brides traditionally wear a white or ivory-coloured dress. There is a little saying that they should also wear 'something borrowed, something blue, something old and something new.' In the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent, the female relatives and friends from both the bride's and groom's families decorate their hands and feet with beautiful intricate designs using deep red henna paste. In India, the bride and groom exchange garlands of flowers after the religious ceremony to cement their relationship. In Germany, when a little girl is born, several trees are planted which are later sold to pay for the wedding. One of the customs in Greece is to bring old crockery and smash it to attract good luck. In China, auspicious dates are set by expert astrologers to ensure the union remains secure. Brides do not see the grooms before the actual wedding day as it is seen as bad luck.

Text B

Birthday Celebrations
(Insert image of birthday party)

Different countries around the world celebrate birthdays in a variety of ways. Birthday cakes have increasingly become popular across the world with many bakers producing brilliant works of art. There are many customs unique to different cultures which are also fun. In China, long noodles signify longevity and the person celebrating their birthday needs to slurp a super-long noodle before biting into it.

In many countries in Europe, people often have two birthdays – one for the name of the saint they are named after and their own. In Mexico, the piñata is popular at birthdays. A piñata is a form made of papier-mâché filled with sweets and chocolates, moved around to be chased and broken open by guests using a stick. In Vietnam, everyone celebrates their birthday on the New Year as it is considered unlucky to celebrate the actual birthday.

Text C

Customs about Money
(Insert image of money)

- In the Czech Republic, some people believe the custom of placing fish scales under the dinner plates or table cloth at the Christmas dinner table is said to bring wealth to the home. Some people apparently carry a fish scale in the wallet to generate money.
- Some Turkish people believe that if the first customer throws silver coins onto the floor of a business, it will attract more people.
- Some Indian shop-owners will not let the first window-shopper of the day leave without buying something, even if it is only a button or a pin, as it is considered unlucky for the rest of the day.
- Other people in India and Pakistan kiss money and press it against their eyes for good luck.

Text D

Customs about Plants
(Insert image of plant)

- Finding a four-leaf clover is considered to be lucky by many people in the UK and Republic of Ireland.
- In some Mediterranean families, a pot of the herb basil kept on the window-sill or on the balcony is said to prevent bad luck and illness. Pine needles are sometimes burnt with juniper and cedar to purify the atmosphere.
- Garlic is used to keep away insects and evil spirits.
- Thyme is supposed to give courage
- A sprig of dried rosemary is used to protect the home.

Part 2 - Reading Multiple Texts

In this part there are four short texts for you to read and 15 questions for you to answer.

Questions 1-5 (1 mark per question)

Read questions 1-5 first and then read Texts A, B, C, and D.

As you read each text, decide which text each question refers to. Choose one letter – **A, B, C** or **D** – and write it in boxes **1-5**. You can use any letter more than once.

Which text refers to

		Text
A. customs in some businesses	1	
B. beliefs about the health properties of vegetation	2	
C. traditions about nuptial ceremonies	3	
D. different attitudes to personal anniversaries	4	
E. colours for a special occasion	5	

Questions 6-10 (1 mark per question)

Choose the **5** statements from **A-H** below that are **TRUE** according to the information given in the texts above. Write the letters of the **TRUE** statements in the boxes provided (in any order).

A. In some countries, people celebrate birthdays on one day.	True Statements	
B. Certain types of flora are believed to be dangerous.		
C. Parts of a fish are considered to be good luck by some people.		
D. Some people celebrate two birthdays in the year.		6
E. In Greece, guests bring old plates and cups to smash at weddings.		7
F. Flowers are not needed at Indian weddings.	8	
F. Some British brides like to wear someone else's jewellery on their special day.	9	
G. Indian shopkeepers are determined to sell to their last customer.	10	

Questions 11-15 (1 mark per question)

The Summary Notes below contain information from the texts about **national customs**. Find a suitable word or a phrase **in the texts** to complete the missing information in gaps 11-15. Write your answers in the spaces provided and you can use **up to 5 words**.

Summary Notes:

Wedding and birthday customs:

- In England, brides usually wear a white or (11) _____ dress.
- In the Middle East and Indian Sub-continent, brides and female guests decorate their hands and feet with (12) _____ henna tattoos.
- In Germany, trees are planted when baby girls are born and sold to raise money for weddings
- In China , long noodles mean (13) _____

Plants:

- Basil is said to prevent bad luck and illness.
- Four-leaf clovers are considered to be lucky
- Purify the atmosphere by burning (14) _____.
- Garlic is used to keep away (15) _____ and evil spirits.

Extension Activities

Task A: Similar meanings

Find synonyms from the texts for these words:

1	very fine; elaborate	A	<i>intricate</i>
2	extra important	B	
3	long life	C	
4	unfortunate	D	
5	create	E	
6	casual observer	F	
7	stop	G	
8	cleanse	H	

Task B: Opposite meanings

Find antonyms from the texts for these words:

1	modern	A	<i>traditional</i>
2	lent	B	
3	trainee, novice	C	
4	poverty, penury	D	
5	disliked	E	
6	pollute	F	
7	attract	G	
8	harm	H	

Task C: Grammar

Complete these sentences using the correct form of the verb in brackets:

- In Turkey, it is believed (believe) that if the first customer _____ (throw) silver coins on to the floor of a business, it will _____ (attract) more people.
- In China, long noodles _____ (signify) longevity and the person celebrating their birthday needs _____ (slurp) a super-long noodle before biting into it.
- Thyme _____ (supposed) to give courage and a sprig of dried rosemary _____ (use) to protect the home.

Further Support Activities:

Task A – Synonyms:

Match the words with the correct meanings.

1.	borrowed	A.	Extremely important
2.	exchange	B.	safe
3.	auspicious	C.	A lot of money
4.	secure	D.	To stop
5.	wealth	E.	Use something belonging to another person with permission
6.	prevent	F.	To give and take something in return

Task B – Antonyms:

Find the words in the box which have the opposite meaning in the list. There are two extra words which you will not need.

novice - attract - protect - unacceptable - brilliant - unfortunate - reckless

1.	keep away	
2.	harm	
3.	dull	
4.	lucky	
5.	expert	

Task C – Grammar

Choose the correct word in brackets to complete the sentence.

- In Vietnam, everyone _____ (**celebrated; celebrate; is celebrating**) their birthday on the New Year as it is _____ (**consider; considering; considered**) unlucky to celebrate their actual birthday.
- Some Indian shop-owners will not _____ (**letting; be letting; let**) the first window-shopper of the day leave without buying something, even if it ___ (**be; are; is**) only a button or a pin, as it is considered unlucky for the rest of the day.
- Pine needles are sometimes _____ (**burning; burn; burnt**) with juniper and cedar to _____ (**purifies; purify; purified**) the atmosphere.