

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: You will listen to an article about Mother's Day. The article is about 5 minutes long. Listen only, and don't worry about understanding everything.

Step 2: Look at the questions. Read and understand them, then listen again. As you are listening, try to answer the questions in your head. Don't write the answers yet. Next, listen again and write the answers this time. Compare your answers with a partner.

Step 3: Read the article. Check in your dictionary any unknown words. Now listen again. Can you understand more?

Step 4: Listen! Listen! Listen! Listen to the article on the train or in your free time. Each time you listen, you will slowly improve!

QUESTIONS

Answer the questions to check comprehension. If you don't know an answer, don't worry. Skip it. Then listen again.

1. What is Mother's Day?
2. What happens at restaurants in America?
3. Where did the holiday begin?
4. According to the article, modern Mother's Day is based on a British holiday. What was it called?
5. What happened on the holiday back then?
6. How did the American Julia Ward Howe see Mother's Day?
7. What did Anna Jarvis do to make the holiday more widespread?
8. When was Mother's Day made a national holiday in the U.S.?
9. What did Anna Jarvis say about the holiday and its commercialization??
10. According to the article, what should all people everywhere do on the holiday?

the ARTICLE

Mother's Day is a holiday to honor and give thanks to our mothers. People celebrate the day all over the world. In France, a flower-shaped cake is part of the family meal. In the U.S., most restaurants claim this day as their busiest all year. In many other countries, carnations have a special significance.

Although the holiday is very commercial, it's not a Hallmark holiday. In other words, it's not a holiday created by businesses to make money. Mother's Day actually has its origins long ago in ancient Greece. Rome, which copied much of the Greek way of life, had a similar holiday. So did other countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Unlike today, though, people didn't honor their own mothers. People honored the mother of the gods, Rhea. After the Roman Empire fell, Mother's Day disappeared.

So how did our modern version of the holiday come about?

Many believe that Mother's Day as we know it originated from the British holiday called "Mothering Sunday." All through the Middle Ages in Europe, people brought gifts to their home (or mother) church on the fourth Sunday of Lent. Then in the 16th century, people began to live greater and greater distances from where they had been born. About this time, it also became increasingly common for children to work far from home as servants and apprentices. They would often need the day off to make the journey, which also allowed them to visit their mothers and family. They would bring a cake and pick wildflowers to give as presents, too. From here the modern version of the holiday was born.

Americans have had a great influence on Mother's Day, too. A woman named Julia Ward Howe brought the holiday from Britain in the 1870s. She saw it as a way to honor mothers, of course, but also as a way to honor and promote peace. Then in the early 1900s, another woman campaigned for a national holiday for mothers. Her name was Anna Jarvis, and she sent letters to business leaders, clergy members, women's clubs, and anyone else who might help. Within a few years, forty-six States celebrated the holiday. In 1914, Mother's Day became an official holiday, and was quickly commercialized with cards, carnation flowers, and chocolate candy. Anna Jarvis "wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit." She also called greeting cards "a poor excuse for the letter you are too lazy to write!"



Different countries celebrate the holiday on different days. Different countries have adopted different traditions. But one thing remains the same everywhere: it's a day to say to your mom, "Thank you."

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES (optional)

1. Which paragraph was the easiest to listen to? Which paragraph was the most difficult? Look at the vocabulary and sentence structure, then think why one paragraph was easy and another difficult.

2. Listen for these words, understand the context, then try to repeat the information from the sentence:

celebrate (paragraph 1)

commercial (paragraph 2)

originated (paragraph 4)

increasingly (paragraph 4)

influence (paragraph 5)

campaigned (paragraph 5)

3. Listen and write the sentences:

All through the Middle Ages in Europe, people brought... (paragraph 4)

In 1914, Mother's Day became an... (paragraph 5)

But one thing remains the same everywhere... (paragraph 6)

ANSWERS

QUESTIONS
1. Mother's Day is a holiday to honor and give thanks to our mothers.
2. In the U.S., most restaurants claim this day as their busiest all year.
3. Mother's Day actually has its origins long ago in ancient Greece.
4. The British holiday was called "Mothering Sunday."
5. People brought gifts to their home (or mother) church on the fourth Sunday of Lent.
6. She saw it as a way to honor mothers, of course, but also as a way to honor and promote peace.
7. She sent letters to business leaders, clergy members, women's clubs, and anyone else who might help.
8. Mother's Day became an official holiday in 1914.
9. She said that she wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit. She also called greeting cards a poor excuse for the letter you are too lazy to write!
10. You should say to your mom, "Thank you."
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - Listen and write the sentences.
...gifts to their home (or mother) church on the fourth Sunday of Lent.
...official holiday, and was quickly commercialized with cards, carnation flowers, and chocolate candy.
...it's a day to say to your mom, "Thank you."