

Holidays in Ukraine

Intermediate – Upper-Intermediate

Ukrainian people are very hard working. But in everyday life, in spite of all difficulties, an important place is occupied by the holidays and celebrations. They embody the soul of the people, its national characteristics and traditions. These festivals diversify and enliven everyday life giving the possibility to relax and gain spiritual and creative inspiration.

Ukrainian national holidays are divided into state, religious, professional, traditional and family.

Celebrations, concerts, mass festivities take place in all the cities and villages of Ukraine. In big cities, bright holiday fireworks end the celebrations.

Festivals associated with the beginning and end of agricultural work are widespread in Ukraine, especially in rural areas. But nowadays, they are also popular in urban culture.

In ancient times, traditional folk rituals were practiced all over the year. Originally these rituals were believed to possess magical powers that ensured a bountiful harvest and fertility in domestic animals.

The ritual cycle begins with **Masliana**, the rite of *provody* (bidding winter farewell and welcoming spring), just before the beginning of Great Lent.

In summer, **Kupala** is a festival to celebrate the beginning of the harvest (**zazhynky**).

Obzhynky is a harvest festival. Nowadays the festival is held at the end of harvest.

Vocabulary

in spite of [in 'spait əv] незважаючи на difficulty ['dɪfɪkəltɪ] труднощі occupied ['ɔkjupaɪd] окупований, зайнятий embody [ɪm'bɒdɪ] втілювати; soul [səʊl] душа, серце characteristic [,kærəktə'rɪstɪk] характерна риса; особливість festival ['festɪvəl] свято, святкування; фестиваль diversify [daɪ'vz:sɪfaɪ] урізноманітнювати enliven [ɪn'laɪvən] пожвавлювати; веселити relax [rɪ'læks] розслабитися gain [geɪn] одержувати spiritual ['spɪrɪtʃuəl] духовний creative [kri'eɪtɪv] творчий, креативний inspiration [,ɪnspə'reɪʃən] натхнення; наснага	divided [dɪ'vaɪdɪd] розділений mass [mæs] масовий festivity [fes'tɪvətɪ] свято; торжество firework ['faɪəwɜ:k] феєрверк associated [ə'səʊʃɪeɪtɪd] пов'язаний agricultural [,ægrɪ'kʌltʃərəl] сільськогосподарський; землеробський widespread [,waɪdspreɪd] (широко) розповсюджений; дуже поширений rural ['ruərəl] сільський area ['eəriə] район urban ['z:bən] міський ancient ['eɪnfənt] старий folk [fəʊk] народ, народний ritual ['rɪtʃuəl] ритуал possess [pə'zes] володіти, мати magical ['mædʒɪkəl] магічний power ['paʊə] сила	ensure [ɪn'ʃʊə] забезпечувати; гарантувати bountiful ['baʊntɪfʊl] щедрий harvest ['hɑ:vɪst] жнива; урожай fertility [fɜ:'tɪlətɪ] родючість; плідність domestic [də'mestɪk] домашній domestic animals свійські тварини cycle ['saɪkl] цикл rite [raɪt] обряд, ритуал bidding ['bɪdɪŋ] запрошення; заклик farewell ['feə'wel] прощання welcoming ['welkəmɪŋ] привітання Great Lent [greɪt] [lent] Великий піст fast [fa:st] піст, постити fasting ['fa:stɪŋ] піст, голодування
--	--	---

Masliana or **Masnytsia** (Ukrainian: Масляна, Масниця) is an Eastern Slavic religious and folk holiday.



It is celebrated during the last week before Great Lent. It comes either at the end of February or at the beginning of March. It lasts from Monday till Sunday. This holiday means the end of winter and the spring coming. It has pagan origin.

Masliana activities include snowball fights, sledding, sleigh rides and lighting bonfires.

The most characteristic food of Masliana is *mlyntsi* (pancakes). They are made of flour, eggs and milk. Mlyntsi are usually eaten with butter and sour cream. Round and golden, they symbolize the Sun.

The mascot of the celebration is usually a brightly dressed straw effigy of Masliana.

As the culmination of the celebration, on Sunday evening, Lady Masliana is stripped of her finery and put to the flames of a bonfire. Lady Masliana's ashes are buried in the snow to fertilize the crops.

Questions

1. What is Masliana?
2. How long does it last?
3. What does this festival mean?
4. What do people do on this holiday?

Vocabulary

<p>Masliana – Масляна Eastern ['i:stən] східний Slavic ['slævɪk] слов'янський religious [rɪ'lɪdʒəs] релігійний folk [fəʊk] народний Great Lent [greɪt] [lent] Великий Піст pagan ['peɪgən] язичеський snowball ['snəʊbɔ:l] сніжок origin ['ɔ:dʒɪn] походження fight [faɪt] бій, битва sledding ['sledɪŋ] катання на санках</p>	<p>sleigh rides [sleɪ] [raɪdʒ] катання на санях lighting bonfire ['laɪtɪŋ] [ˈbɒnfʌɪə] запалювання багаття characteristic [,kærəktə'rɪstɪk] характерний; типовий pancake ['pæŋkeɪk] млинець; оладка mascot ['mæskət] талісман celebration [,selə'breɪʃən] святкування brightly ['braɪtlɪ] яскраво dressed [drest] одягнений</p>	<p>straw [strɔ:] солом'яний effigy ['efɪdʒi] фігура, статуя culmination [kelmɪ'neɪʃən] кульмінація stripped [stript] роздягнений finery ['faɪnəri] пишне вбрання, прикраса flame [fleɪm] полум'я ash [æʃ] зола, попіл bury ['berɪ] заривати, закопувати fertilize ['fɜ:tilaɪz] удобрювати crop [krɒp] урожай</p>
---	---	---

Ivan Kupala's Day or **Kupala Festival** is a summer holiday. It is celebrated on July 7. Kupala Festival is a Slavic celebration of ancient pagan origin. It marks the end of the summer solstice and the beginning of the harvest (midsummer, zazhynky; Ukrainian: зажинки).



The ancient Kupala rites are connected with the role of water in fertility and ritual purification.

Kupala is believed to be the god of love and harvest and the personification of the earth's fertility. According to popular belief, 'Kupala eve' is the only time of the year when the earth reveals its secrets and makes ferns bloom to mark places where its treasures are buried, and the only time when trees speak and even move and when witches gather.

It is to be noted, however, that biologists have held the persistent scientific fact that ferns have never and will never bloom.

On the eve unmarried women, signified by the garlands on their hair, are the first to enter the forest near the river or pond. They are followed by young men. Therefore, the quest to find herbs and the *fern flower* may lead to the blooming of relationships between pairs of men and women within the forest.

There they build Kupala fires around which they perform ritual dances and sing ritual songs.

Young people jump over the flames of bonfires in a ritual test of bravery and faith. If the couple in love jumps over the fire while holding their hands, it is a sign of their destined lives.

Girls may float wreaths of flowers, often lit with candles, on rivers and would attempt to gain foresight into their relationship fortunes from the flow patterns of the flowers on the river. Men may attempt to capture the wreaths, in the hope of capturing the interest of the woman who floated the wreath.

In **Gogol's** story *The Eve of Ivan Kupala* a young man finds the fabulous fern flower but is cursed by it. Gogol's tale may have been the stimulus for **Modest Mussorgsky** to compose his tone poem *Night on Bald Mountain*.



Vocabulary

<p>Ivan Kupala celebrate ['seləbreɪt] святкувати celebration [,selə'breɪʃən] святкування ancient ['eɪnʃənt] древній mark [mɑ:k] відзначати solstice ['sɒlstɪs] сонцестояння harvest ['hɑ:vɪst] жнива; збирання хліба; урожай midsummer середина літа rite [raɪt] обряд, ритуал connected [kə'nektɪd] пов'язаний earth [ɜ:θ] земля fertility [fɜ:'tɪlətɪ] родючість ritual ['rɪtʃuəl] ритуал; ритуальний purification [pjʊə'rifɪ'keɪʃən] очищення harvest ['hɑ:vɪst] урожай personification [pə'sɒnɪfɪ'keɪʃən] персоніфікація, уособлення belief [bɪ'li:f] віра, вірування eve [i:v] переддень, напередодні reveal [ri'vi:l] відкривати, показувати fern [fɜ:n] папороть bloom [blu:m] розцвітати treasure ['treɪzə] клад, скарб buried ['berɪd]похований witch[wɪtʃ] відьма gather ['gæðə] збиратися biologist [baɪ'ɒlədʒɪst] біолог persistent [pə'sɪstənt] стійкий, постійний</p>	<p>scientific [saɪən'tɪfɪk] науковий unmarried [ʌn'mærɪd] неодружений; незаміжня pond [pɒnd] ставок fire['faɪə] вогонь, полум'я signified ['sɪnɪfaɪd] позначений garland ['gɑ:lənd] гірлянда; вінок hair [heə] волосся therefore ['ðeəfɔ:] з цієї причини; внаслідок цього, тому, отже quest [kwest] пошуки herb [hɜ:b] трава; рослина blooming ['blu:mɪŋ] розквіт relationship [rɪ'leɪʃənʃɪp] зв'язок pair [peə] пара within [wɪ'ðɪn] в, всередині fire ['faɪə] вогонь, полум'я perform [pə'fɔ:m] виконувати; грати flame [fleɪm] полум'я bonfire ['bɒnfaɪə] багаття (часто з нагоди якого-небудь свята) bravery ['breɪvərɪ] хоробрість, сміливість, мужність faith [feɪθ] віра, вірність failure ['feɪljə] невдача, неуспіх, провал couple ['kʌpl] пара complete [kəm'pli:t] завершувати, виконувати sign [saɪn] знак</p>	<p>destined ['destɪnd] призначений, визначений float [fləʊt] плавати, спускати (на воду) wreath [ri:θ] вінок lit past, p. р. від light запалювати, засвічувати candle ['kændl] свіча, свічка attempt [ə'tempt] спроба, проба gain [geɪn] одержувати, отримувати; досягати foresight ['fɔ:sɑɪt] передбачення fortune ['fɔ:tʃu:n] доля, фортуна flow [fləʊ] спливання, витікання pattern ['pætən] зразок, модель capture ['kæptʃə] піймати, схопити fabulous ['fæbjuləs] вигаданий, міфічний fern flower квітка папороті cursed [kɜ:st] проклятий tale [teɪl] розповідь; історія stimulus ['stɪmjələs] стимул compose [kəm'pəʊz] створювати tone poem ['təʊn'pəʊɪm] симфонічна поема Bald Mountain [bɔ:ld] ['maʊntɪn] Лиса Гора</p>
---	--	---

A **harvest festival** is an annual celebration that occurs around the time of the main harvest of a given region. According to the differences in climate and crops around the world, harvest festivals can be found at various times at different places. Harvests festivals typically feature feasting, both family and public, with foods that are drawn from crops that come to maturity around the time of the festival. Ample food and freedom from the necessity to work in the fields are two central features of harvest festivals: eating, merriment, contests, music and romance are common features of harvest festivals around the world.

In Ukraine, thanks have been given for successful harvests since pagan times. Nowadays the festival is held at the end of harvest (*obzhynky*, Ukrainian: обжинки), which varies in different parts of Ukraine. It is both a Church festival giving thanks to God for the harvest and a more secular public festival remembered in schools, cities and villages.



The Harvest Festival is dedicated to the crops, fertility and family well-being. Harvest is mainly associated with grain, corn, fruit and vegetables, for which we give thanks. This is the whole point of the Harvest Festival.

Large agricultural fairs are held in the villages and cities. The most famous Ukrainian fair is held in the village of Velyki Sorochyntsi near Poltava in the Myrhorodskyi Region. The historic **Sorochyntsi Fair** features in a number of Ukrainian works of literature and music, including **The Fair at Sorochyntsi**, a short story by **Mykola Gogol**, and **The Fair at Sorochyntsi**, an opera by **Modest Mussorgsky**.



Another harvest thanksgiving is also held by the Orthodox Church on September 21. On this day Christians celebrate the **Nativity of the Theotokos**, the birth of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. The celebration of the **Nativity of the Virgin** coincides with the end of the main agricultural work. People honour and thank the Virgin for protection and for the harvest. She is believed to give prosperity, help and protection to the family. She is also the patroness of agriculture.

The celebrations on this day usually include singing hymns, praying, and decorating churches with baskets of fruit and food. People bring in produce from the garden, allotment or farm. The food is often distributed among the poor and senior citizens of the local community, or used to raise funds for the church, or charity.

Vocabulary

<p>annual ['ænjuəl] щорічний occur [ə'kʊ:] траплятися, відбуватися climate ['klaɪmət] клімат crop [krɒp] урожай feature ['fi:tʃə] показувати, бути характерною рисою feast [fi:st] бенкетувати, святкувати draw [drɔ:] мати, отримувати maturity [mə'tʃuərəti] зрілість ample ['æmpl] рясний; багатий field [fi:ld] поле freedom ['fri:dəm] воля, свобода necessity [nə'sesəti] необхідність feature ['fi:tʃə] особливість; ознака merriment ['merɪmənt] веселощі contest ['kɒntest] соревнование; состязание; конкурс romance [rə'mæns] роман, любовные отношения common ['kɒmən] обыкновенный; обычный thanks [θæŋks] подяка successful [sək'sesful] ragan ['reɪgən] язичеський vary ['veəri] різнитися; відрізнятися secular ['sekjulə] світський, мирський, нецерковний remember [rɪ'membə] пам'ятати, згадувати</p>	<p>dedicated ['dedɪkeɪtɪd] присвячений fertility [fɜ:'tɪləti] родючість; багатство well-being ['wel,bɪ:ɪŋ] добробут; процвітання mainly ['meɪnli] здебільшого grain [greɪn] зерно; хлібні злаки corn [kɔ:n] кукурудза, зерно, пшениця whole [həʊl] ціле; цілий the whole point весь сенс fair [feə] ярмарок thanksgiving [,θæŋks'gɪvɪŋ] подяка Orthodox ['ɔ:θədɒks] православний church [tʃɜ:tʃ] церква Christian ['krɪstʃən] християнин; християнка nativity [nə'tɪvɪti] Різдво; народження Theotokos [θi'ɒtəkəs] Богородиця birth [bɜ:θ] народження Jesus Christ ['dʒi:zəs] [kraɪst] Ісус Христос Virgin ['vɜ:dʒɪn] Діва coincide [,kəʊɪn'saɪd] збігатися (в часі) honour ['ɒnə] шанувати, поважати protection [prə'tekʃən] заступництво, покровительство</p>	<p>prosperity [prɒs'perəti] процвітання, успіх patroness ['peɪtrənɪs] покровителька agricultural [,ægrɪ'kʌltʃərəl] сільськогосподарський agriculture ['ægrɪkʌltʃə] сільське господарство include [ɪn'klu:d] включати hymn [hɪm] гімн; церковний гімн, псалом praying ['preɪɪŋ] моління, молитва decorate ['dekəreɪt] прикрашати basket ['bɑ:skɪt] кошик, корзина produce ['prɒdju:s] сільськогосподарська продукція allotment [ə'lɒtmənt] ділянка; город distributed [dɪs'trɪbjutɪd] розподілений among [ə'mʌŋ] серед, між poor [puə] бідний the poor бідняки senior ['si:nɪə] старший (за віком) ; літня людина citizen ['sɪtɪzən] громадянин, громадянка; міський житель local ['ləʊkəl] місцевий community [kə'mju:nəti] used [ju:zd] використаний raise [reɪz] збирати (гроші) funds [fʌndz] фонди, кошти; гроші charity ['tʃærɪti] благодійність</p>
--	---	---

Project: The Harvest Festival

1. Choose a celebration. Draw a diagram with important words about it. Check with your teacher which words can't be translated into English.

- The Harvest Festival in our School.
- The Harvest Festival in our Village.
- The Harvest Festival in our City.
- The Harvest Festival in our Church.

2. Make notes about these things. Use words from your diagram.

- the place and date / the reason for celebration
- the preparation
- what happens / your feelings

3. Use your notes to write three paragraphs. Check them for prepositions, spelling and punctuation.

4. You may also add real photos of this celebration for your presentation.

5. Work in groups. Read the other descriptions. Which one is the most interesting?