

December solstice

Language

Festival and celebration vocabulary, and geographical vocabulary

Level

Pre-intermediate (equivalent to CEF level A2)

Comment

This infograph lesson looks at interesting facts and figures about the December solstice.

How to use the lesson

- 1 Write *December* on the board. Ask a student to tell you a word connected with this month. Write the word on the board and drill the pronunciation. Ask students to work in pairs or a group of three and add 9 more words to their lists together.
- 2 Ask students to look at exercise 2. They work in pairs or small groups to answer the questions together. You may want to demonstrate the activity first with a strong student by discussing the first question the student.
- 3 Ask students to look at exercise 3 when they have finished. They read the text to compare their answers with the information in the infograph. You could give them the infograph as a printed worksheet or display it on the board from the *Global* website.
- 4 Ask students to look at exercise 4. Tell them to find the words that match each definition. Students can do this individually and then check with a partner or work in pairs if it is a weaker group. Write the vocabulary on the board and work on the pronunciation of any difficult sounds.
- 5 Ask students to turn over their worksheets or remove the image from the screen. Tell them to look at exercise 5. They complete the gaps in the paragraph using the words in the box. Now tell them to check their answers by looking at the image of the Earth in the infograph.
- 6 Ask the students to look at exercise 6 and make two columns in their notebooks with the headings: *Things that people do* and *Food that people eat or offer*. Ask students to look at the four December solstice celebrations in the second part of the infograph. They work in pairs or a group of three and write the relevant information in the correct column.
- 7 Ask students to think of a popular festival that they and their family or friends celebrate. Ask them to prepare some information on it by answering the questions in exercise 6. They prepare the information individually. Be prepared to support them as they do this.
- 8 Students work with a partner or a small group and discuss the celebrations together.

Answer key

1 Students' own answers.

2, 3

1 Between December 21 and 23 in the northern hemisphere and between June 20 and 22 in the southern hemisphere.

2 Spring, summer and autumn

3 Between December 21 and 23 in the northern hemisphere and between June 20 and 22 in the southern hemisphere.

4 Longer.

5 Students' own answers. The four mentioned in the text are: Dongzhi, Hogmanay, Yalda and Chaomos.

4

1 turn away, turn towards

2 tilt

3 rays

4 point

5 follow

6 midnight

7 gifts

8 coal

9 baths

10 relative

5

1 The Equator

2 hemispheres

3 the Tropic of Cancer

4 the Tropic of Capricorn

5 the Antarctic Circle

6 the Arctic Circle

6

| Things that people do | Food that people eat or offer |
|---|-------------------------------|
| meet | rice |
| eat | fruit |
| some say they are a year older | cake |
| visit family and friends after midnight | bread |
| take gifts | |
| not sleep | |
| have small parties | |
| have baths | |
| sing | |
| dance | |
| make fires | |

Related websites

The following websites might be useful for either you or your students.

<http://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/december-solstice.html>

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/12/1220_021220_solstice.html

<http://ed101.bu.edu/StudentDoc/Archives/fall05/andiq87/DongZhi.htm>

http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/Celebrating_Yalda_2.htm

[http://www.csmonitor.com/1982/0121/012159.html/\(page\)/2](http://www.csmonitor.com/1982/0121/012159.html/(page)/2)

<http://www.scotland.com/festivals/hogmanay/>