

HOLIDAYS

- **Holiday Calendar**

Listen to the cassette for the description of the holiday calendar. In the chart below, write in the ordinal numbers you hear. Note that some holidays are celebrated on the same date every year, and others are always celebrated on the same day of the month.

<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY</p> <p>New Year's Day: the ____</p> <p>Martin Luther King, Jr., Day: the ____ Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY</p> <p>Valentine's Day: the ____</p> <p>President's Day: the ____ Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MARCH</p> <p>St. Patrick's Day: the ____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL</p> <p>April Fools' Day: the ____</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MAY</p> <p>Mother's Day: the ____ Sunday</p> <p>Memorial Day: the ____ Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JUNE</p> <p>Father's Day: the ____ Sunday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JULY</p> <p>Independence Day: the ____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AUGUST</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Labor Day: the ____ Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OCTOBER</p> <p>Halloween: the ____</p> <p>Columbus Day: the ____ Monday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NOVEMBER</p> <p>Veterans Day: the ____.</p> <p>Thanksgiving: the ____ Thursday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DECEMBER</p> <p>Christmas: the ____</p>

- **CLOZE**

Read the lecture below about the types of American holidays. Try to fill in the blanks with the correct words.

Americans love holidays and celebrate a variety of days all through the1..... . They observe federal holidays, which give them a2..... off from school or work, and other celebration days without a day off.

The government of the United States has declared ten3.....holidays. On these holidays, all federal government offices, banks, and post offices are.....4..... . Since the American states have their own governments, each5..... has a right to decide which of the federal

holidays it will6..... . Private businesses can decide which of these federal holidays their employees will observe with a7.....day. As it happens, most states and businesses8..... at least nine of the federal holidays so everyone can have at least nine days off from9..... or10.....every year.

There are several different11..... of federal holidays. Some are12..... holidays, which remember importantin the history of the United States. For instance, Thanksgiving is a day to remember the very beginnings of the13..... and the first people that came and14..... in America. Another holiday, Independence Day, celebrates the American colonies' Declaration of Independence from15..... and the birth of the United States. Veterans Day and16..... Day honor Americans who have fought and died in Wars.

Other federal holidays are patriotic in a different way. They remember important17.....in the country's history. For example, Columbus Day18..... Christopher Columbus, the19..... explorer financed by Spain who opened America to European exploration. Two presidents, George20..... and Abraham Lincoln, are honored in the month of their birth on Presidents' Day. Finally, Martin Luther King, Jr., Day honors a21..... African American civil rights leader.

Some federal holidays are special days that are also22..... in other countries, but perhaps in different ways and at different times of the year. New23..... Day is one of these special days. Labor Day, a holiday which honors all24..... people, is another

Most25..... holidays are not federal holidays because the American constitution separates the government from the church. However, there is one religious holiday that is also a federal holiday, and that is26..... .

There are also many27..... days of celebration in the United States that are not observed with28..... from school or work. These days are celebrated with their own special29....., either by all Americans or by specific30..... or religious groups. Some different types of these celebration days are religious holidays and ethnic holidays.

Religious holidays are celebrated by Americans of different religious31..... For example, Easter is a day celebrated by Christians, and Hanukkah and Passover are examples of32..... holidays.

Ethnic holidays are celebrated with special traditions brought to this country by the many33..... who came to the United States from all over the world. For example, St. Patrick's Day is a holiday that celebrates the34..... background of many Americans.

Americans also have a number of special celebrations just for fun,35....., and family, such as36..... a special day on which children dress up in37..... and eat lots of candy. April Fools' Day is celebrated by playing little38..... on friends. There are also holidays to

.....39..... parents, such as Mother's Day and Father's Day, and a holiday just for40....., Valentine's Day.

As time goes on, other days become part of the American holiday41..... One example of this is Earth Day, a special day in April that honors This day is observed by more and more Americans each year who are interested in42..... the earth.

Although it is difficult to get the Congress to agree to add a new federal holiday to the American calendar, there is always room for new celebrations.

(from **Talking about the USA**, *Janet Giannotti*
and Suzanne Mele Szwarcewics)

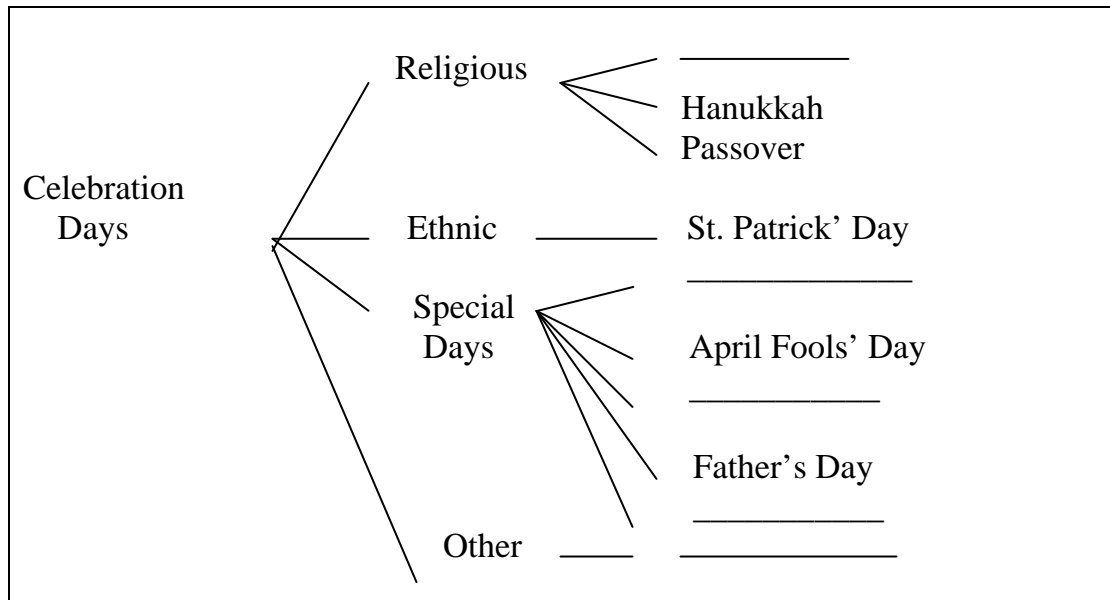
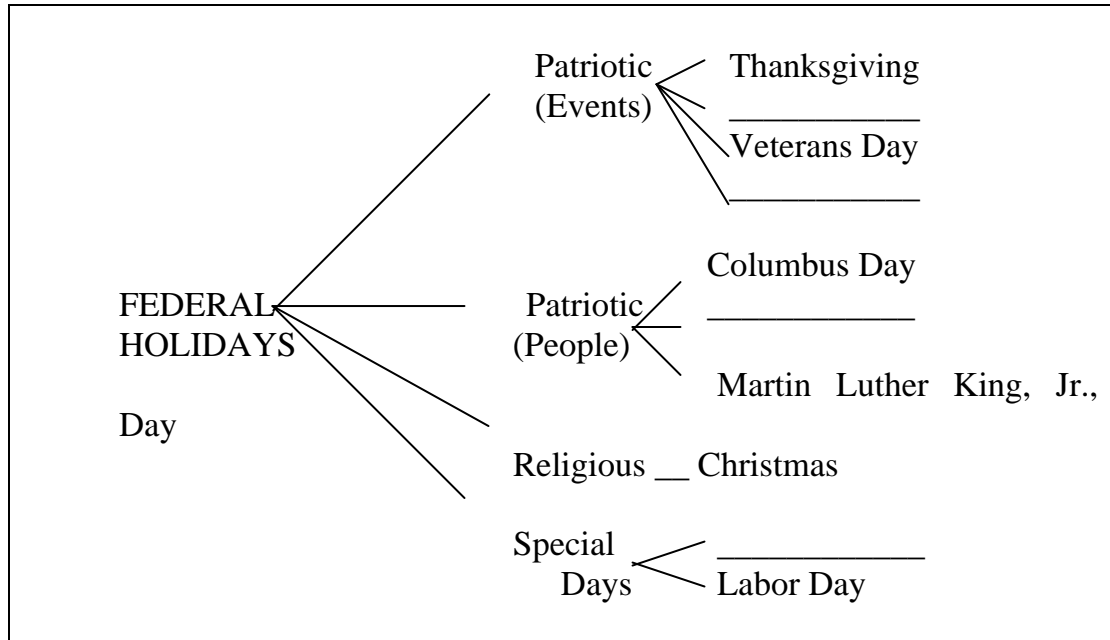
• **Write T for true and F for false. Correct the false statements**

1. _____ All states celebrate ten federal holidays.
2. _____ Thanksgiving is a day to remember the first people who came and settled in America.
3. _____ Independence Day is an example of a patriotic holiday.
4. _____ Columbus Day honors an American president.
5. _____ Martin Luther King, Jr., Day remembers an event in American history.
6. _____ Most religious holidays are also federal holidays.
7. _____ Labor Day honors working people.
8. _____ There is usually no school or work on Halloween and Valentine's Day.
9. _____ Father's Day is a special day when Americans remember their ethnic backgrounds and traditions.
10. _____ Earth Day is a special day that honors nature.

• **Types of American Holidays**

Listen to the cassette and complete the diagram about types of American holidays. Fill in with the names of holidays in the box.

Earth Day	Independence Day	New Year's Day
Easter	Memorial Day	President's Day
Halloween	Mother's Day	Valentine's Day



- **THANKSGIVING HISTORY**

Listen to the lecture and fill in the missing information in the chart below.

Dates	What Happened?
	The Pilgrims left England.
November 1620	
Winter, 1620- 1621	
Spring and summer, 1621	
	The Pilgrims had a great harvest.
After the harvest,1621	
1941	

- **Choose the best answer.**

- Why did the Pilgrims leave England?
 - for health reasons
 - for religious reasons
 - for economic reasons
- Where is Plymouth Rock?
 - in England
 - in Mayflower
 - in Massachusetts
- What is one type of crop that the Pilgrims learned to grow in the new land?
 - corn
 - rice
 - turkey
- How did the Native Americans help the Pilgrims to survive the first year?
 - They taught them to hunt.
 - They taught them to sail.
 - They taught them to pray.
- For most the Americans what is the most important part of the Thanksgiving celebrations?
 - the parades
 - the football games
 - the meal
- Where does the famous Thanksgiving Day parade take place?
 - in New York
 - in Massachusetts
 - in Washington, D.C.
- Where do Americans often volunteer to work on Thanksgiving?
 - in schools
 - in stores
 - in soup kitchens

8. How long has Thanksgiving been celebrated?
 h. over 100 years
 b. over 200 years
 c. over 300 years

• **Christmas carols**

Listen to a few verses from these popular Christmas carols and fill in the missing words below.

Silent Night

Silent night, night.
 All is, all is bright
 Round you virgin and child.
 Holy so tender and mild.
 Sleep in heavenly
 Sleep in heavenly

Jingle Bells

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Dashing through the
 On a one-horse
 sleigh.
 O'er the fields we,
 Laughing all the</p> <p>3. Jingle bells, jingle bells,
 Jingle all the
 Oh, what fun it is to

 In a one-horse open

 (Repeat)</p> | <p>2. Bells on bobtails

 Making spirits
 What fun it is to ride and

 A sleighing song!</p> |
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Source

Talking about the USA: an Active Introduction to American Culture, Janet Giannotti and Suzanne Mele Szwarczewics, Prentice Hall Regents, 1996

Suggested reading

Portrait of the USA, published by the United States Information Agency, 1979
<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/factover/homepage.htm>

About the USA, Elain Kim, the Office Of English Language Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, The United States Department of State, Washington DC 20547, 1989