Traditions bluff
festivals and celebrations/ British culture/ cultural training

Without looking at the worksheet below, read the British customs that you have been given and guess if any are made up.

Make up imaginary ones and read the true and false ones to another group for them to guess which is which.

Look at all of the customs and underline useful phrases above for talking about traditions such as festivals.

Compare as a class or under the fold.

Write one true custom from another country and make up two false ones.

Describe the three customs to the class (from memory, without reading out what you have prepared). Can the class guess which one is true?

----------fold, cover or cut----------

Actually, all of them are true.

Suggested answers

- In my hometown,
- it is the custom
- I haven't seen this many times, but
- it is traditional for
- Nowadays… is more famous(...) but
- you can still find the old custom of
- I don't know if you've heard of this one
- It only happens in one place once a year, but
- it has become quite famous (due to)
- My favourite traditional… is called….
- there's a particular day we usually play that on
- In the Middle Ages
- my hometown is one of the few places that
- this tradition still carries on in…
- I'm not sure how traditional this is, but

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Cards to cut up

“In my hometown, it is the custom once a year for women to cook flat cakes in a frying pan and race down the street, throwing the cakes (called pancakes) into the air and catching them in the pans. There are no particular rules on how many times you have to throw it, though, so taking part is more important than winning.”
“I haven’t seen this many times, but it is traditional for men to tie bells to their legs and dance in the street, waving their handkerchiefs in the air. It’s called Morris dancing, although I’ve no idea why”
“Nowadays May Day is more famous for political demonstrations, but you can still find the old custom of the maypole- tying ribbons to a tall wooden post and dancing round it until all the ribbons are wrapped round the post.”
“I don’t know if you’ve heard of this one. It only happens in one place once a year, but it has become quite famous due to being covered on TV a few times. It’s called cheese rolling, and it consists of a group of men roll a large cheese down a steep hill and then running down after it. I’m not sure why the cheese is important, because no one ever catches it and the winner is just the person who reaches the bottom of the hill first”
“My favourite traditional game is called “apple bobbing”. You put apples into a bowl of water and try to pick them up with your teeth. I think there’s a particular day we usually play that on, but I can’t remember when”
“In the Middle Ages this happened at almost all village festivals, but my hometown is one of the few places that continue doing it every year. Young men sit over a river on a long tree trunk which has been covered with fat and try to knock each other off it by hitting each other with pillows. Actually, maybe the traditional version doesn’t have pillows!”
“I couldn’t believe it the first time I heard that this tradition still carries on in the 21st century, but once a year the Queen gives a small gift of money to twelve poor people in a special ceremony.”
“I’m not sure how traditional this is, but in one village I saw a game they play once in year in which people stand on flowerpots in the middle of the street, and try to knock each other off the flowerpots with a dead fish on a piece of string”

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