

## Teaching notes

**Key Stages:** KS3–4.

**Activity type:** starter activity (three-way card sort).

This activity works well as a starter for:

- looking at traditions and ceremonies with a KS3 class
- linking RE and Citizenship when looking at multicultural Britain at KS3 or KS4.

### Ways of using it

It could be used in **small groups**, with each set of cards printed in a different colour. The group has to put together the triad of description, festival and belief.

As a **whole class ice breaker**, each student could be given a card as they come into the room. They then have to get into threes to form the triads of cards. A class of more than 27 could appoint some observers to report back on how the students worked together, or some weaker students could be paired with some more able ones.

### Answers

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1. Eid – Islam
2. Chinese New Year – no specific religion; astrology
3. Shrove Tuesday – Christianity
4. Easter Sunday – Christianity
5. Father's Day – no specific belief
6. Yom Kippur – Judaism
7. Diwali – Sikhism
8. Halloween – no specific belief; Celtic tradition
9. Christmas Day – Christianity

### Follow-up ideas

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In small groups, students describe **how they personally have participated** in two of the celebrations listed (or two other festivals).

Ask a volunteer from each group to explain to the class a situation where they've have come into contact with **a festival they don't personally celebrate**.

**For example:** 'I love getting loads of Christmas cards, even though I'm Sikh and don't celebrate Christmas'; 'My dad always buys dates just before Eid because they're on offer in the supermarket, even though we're not Muslim'; 'My cousin's Chinese wife always gives us money at Chinese New Year, even though I'm Polish'.

Ask each group to list three **advantages of celebrating different festivals**.

**For example:** interesting to find out more about each other's cultures; exciting to receive gifts and special food from friends with different beliefs; encourages people from different backgrounds to accept each other's differences; citizens belonging to minority groups feel welcome when they arrive in Britain; people realise that there are many similarities between special days in the calendars of different religions ...

**Description of the festival**

<p>1. This name can refer to several different festivals. *** Milad-an-Nabi commemorates the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is the most significant date in the calendar, and is celebrated by speeches and songs in mosques. ***-al-Fitr celebrates the end of a period of fasting during the Holy Month (Ramadan). ***-al-Adha celebrates the occasion when Allah appeared to Ibrahim in a dream, and asked him to sacrifice his son Isma'il.</p>	<p>2. A week before new year (at the beginning of the first lunar month), families decorate the house with red paper and flowers, pay off their debts, and prepare lots of food and gifts for friends and relatives.  Each year is named after an animal, and the animal names are repeated every 12 years. Some people believe that the animal of your birth year influences your personality.</p>	<p>3. This day marks the start of Lent – the 40 days before Easter. Lent was traditionally a period of fasting, and *** was a time to use up all the rich food in the house, such as eggs and fat. These days, it is often marked with a feast of pancakes. For Lent, people often give up something unhealthy that they enjoy, such as chocolate or alcohol.</p>
<p>4. This day marks the crucifixion (= killing on the cross) of Jesus, to pay for mankind's sins, and his resurrection (= return to life).  Nowadays, people often share chocolate eggs as a symbol of rebirth, and families get together.</p>	<p>5. This is a more recent tradition than Mother's Day. Gifts are often given and dads tend to have the 'day off' from chores, and to get 'looked after' by their children.</p>	<p>6. This means 'day of atonement*' and it marks the start of the new year. Traditionally, believers fast from nightfall on the eve of the festival until nightfall at the end of *** itself. They eat and drink nothing for about 25 hours and spend most of the day praying in the synagogue.  * atonement = showing you are sorry for something you have done</p>
<p>7. This name means 'rows of lighted lamps'. It is also known as the 'festival of lights' because houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps (called 'diyas'). It is a celebration of freedom – freedom to practise your own faith, freedom for others to have different views, and freedom to fight persecution. It is celebrated by exchanging sweets and presents and by worshipping in temples.</p>	<p>8. Celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> October, this festival traditionally marked the end of the ancient Celtic year, but now is generally viewed as a bit of fun. Witches and evil spirits are supposedly driven away with spells and fires before the new year starts. Over the years, many games and superstitions have become associated with this day, for example apple bobbing.</p>	<p>9. This festival celebrates the birth of Christ and is commemorated on 25<sup>th</sup> December. Families celebrate by giving and receiving gifts. They also eat special food such as turkey, Brussels sprouts, mince pies and a chocolate dessert called 'Yule log'.</p>

**NB** On some cards, \*\*\* replaces the name of the festival.

Name of festival

Father's Day	Halloween	Diwali
Easter Sunday	Shrove Tuesday	Yom Kippur
Eid	Chinese New Year	Christmas Day

Name of religion/belief

Judaism	No specific belief; Celtic tradition	No specific religion; astrology
Christianity	Islam	Sikhism
Christianity	Christianity	No specific belief