

Mother's Day



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you celebrate Mother's Day in your country? When is it? How do people celebrate?
2. Why do mothers deserve a special day?
3. How do mothers differ from fathers?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| ___ 1. appreciate | a) to cause someone to believe or feel something |
| ___ 2. ancient | b) a leader in the church or government |
| ___ 3. fertility | c) a type of flower |
| ___ 4. motherhood | d) to be thankful for, to value greatly |
| ___ 5. occur | e) to care for (to bring up, feed, and educate) |
| ___ 6. honour | f) small jobs, ordinary housework |
| ___ 7. convert | g) from long ago |
| ___ 8. suggest | h) to change |
| ___ 9. convince | i) the state of being a mother |
| ___ 10. role | j) a person who works in a house for pay or food |
| ___ 11. nurture | k) a position, a purpose |
| ___ 12. carnation | l) the ability to reproduce (to have children) |
| ___ 13. minister | m) to show respect |
| ___ 14. servant | n) to happen |
| ___ 15. chores | o) to present an idea |



Reading

1. Many countries all over the world celebrate Mother's Day. Although not all countries have chosen the same date to celebrate Mother's Day, children everywhere use this day to show how much they **appreciate** their mothers.
2. As with many other holidays, Mother's Day dates back to the time of the **ancient** Greeks and Romans. The Greek goddess of **fertility** and **motherhood** was Rhea. Celebrations for Rhea **occurred** each spring and involved festivities with lots of flowers, honey cakes, and delicious wines. The Romans continued this tradition by celebrating Cybele, the mother of all their gods. The Christians later took this holiday and **converted** it to a celebration of the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ.
3. During the 1600s, England celebrated a holiday called Mothering Sunday. At this time, many of the poor people of England worked as **servants** for the rich and lived far away from their own families. On Mothering Sunday, which was in the spring, the servants were given the day off to return home to spend time with their mothers. Wildflowers and sweet raisin buns were very popular on this day.
4. Two American women played an important part in bringing Mother's Day to the United States. In 1872, Julia Ward Howe first **suggested** the idea of Mother's Day in her city, Boston. A short time later, in 1908, a woman named Anna Jarvis wanted to **honour** her own mother, so she **convinced** her town in West Virginia to hold a celebration for all mothers. She chose May 10, the anniversary of her mother's death. Then Anna and her supporters began to write letters to **ministers**, businessmen, and politicians to try to establish a national Mother's Day. Her campaign was successful, and finally, in 1914, the president
5. of the United States declared Mother's Day a national holiday. It would be held every year on the second Sunday of May. By the end of Anna Jarvis's life, Mother's Day was celebrated in more than 40 countries around the world.
5. Although the traditional **role** of mothers has changed in many countries over the years, the role of **nurturing** and caring for families remains. While different countries celebrate and recognize their mothers in different ways, many traditions are similar. Flowers, such as **carnations** and roses, have been an important part of Mother's Day for a very long time. Children of many different cultures also give their mothers cards, chocolates, and presents to show their love and appreciation. In some countries, children do the household **chores** for the day, serve their mothers breakfast in bed, or take them to a restaurant for dinner. No matter where one lives, Mother's Day is the one day of the year when children young and old recognize and honour their mothers.



Comprehension

Practise asking and answering the following questions with your partner.
Then write the answers in your notebook.

1. When is Mother's Day celebrated in the United States?
2. Where did Mother's Day originate?
3. When did the celebration of Rhea occur and what did the festivities include?
4. How did the Christians change the celebration of Mother's Day?
5. What usually happened on Mothering Sunday in England during the 1600s?
6. Who first suggested a Mother's Day in the United States?
7. Why did Anna Jarvis choose May 10 as a day to honour mothers?
8. What did Anna Jarvis do to try to make Mother's Day a national holiday?
9. When did Mother's Day become an official national holiday in the United States?
10. What are some of the ways that children show their appreciation for their mothers on Mother's Day?

Vocabulary Review

A. Choose the Closest Meaning

Choose the word(s) closest in meaning to the underlined word in the following sentences.

1. The celebration for the goddess Rhea included lots of cakes and delicious wines.
 - a) expensive
 - b) tasty
 - c) spring
2. Anna Jarvis convinced her town to have a Mother's Day celebration on May 10, the anniversary of her mother's death.
 - a) all-day festivities
 - b) church
 - c) same date every year
3. Anna and her supporters began to write letters to businessmen and politicians.
 - a) female friends
 - b) people who help
 - c) coworkers
4. Anna's campaign was successful, and Mother's Day became a national holiday.
 - a) letters to a minister
 - b) a number of activities with a special purpose
 - c) celebration
5. While different countries celebrate in different ways, many traditions are similar.
 - a) interesting
 - b) happy
 - c) the same

B. Complete the Sentences

Choose the correct word from the list to complete the following sentences.

1. Before we went on our European vacation, we went to the bank to _____ our American dollars to Euros.
2. I can't go to the movie until I finish all my household _____.
3. I want to try that new restaurant. I heard the food there is _____.
4. I really _____ all your help. Thank you!
5. When you get married, you promise to love and _____ your husband or wife.

Word List:

- appreciate
- ancient
- fertility
- motherhood
- occur
- honour
- convert
- suggest
- convince
- role
- nurture
- carnation
- minister
- servant
- chores
- delicious
- anniversary
- supporters
- campaign
- similar

Pair Work (Student A)

A. Sharing Information

You and your partner each have a chart containing different information about Mother's Day around the world. Read your chart and then share your information with your partner so that you can both complete the questions on the following page.

Mother's Day Around the World			
Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on May 10	Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May	Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on different days	Interesting Mother's Day customs in certain countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahrain • India • Mexico • Pakistan • Saudi Arabia • El Salvador 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia • Canada • Finland • Japan • United States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argentina <i>second Sunday in October</i> • Portugal <i>first Sunday in May</i> • Lebanon <i>first day of spring</i> • Serbia <i>second Sunday before Christmas</i> • Russia <i>on International Women's Day in early March</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in the United States often give their mothers breakfast in bed. • Spanish children give their mothers white roses. • In Spain and Portugal, people go to church to pay tribute to the Virgin Mary. • In Sweden, the Red Cross sells little plastic flowers and gives the money to women with very large families to go on vacation. • In Ethiopia, Mother's Day festivities last two or three days. • Children in France give their mothers a cake decorated like a bouquet of flowers.

Pair Work (Student B)

A. Sharing Information

You and your partner each have a chart containing different information about Mother's Day around the world. Read your chart and then share your information with your partner so that you can both complete the questions on the following page.

Mother's Day Around the World			
Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on May 10	Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May	Some of the countries that celebrate Mother's Day on different days	Interesting Mother's Day customs in certain countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hong Kong • Malaysia • Oman • Qatar • Singapore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belgium • Denmark • Italy • Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spain <i>first Sunday in May</i> • United Arab Emirates <i>March 21</i> • France <i>last Sunday in May</i> • Norway <i>second Sunday in February</i> • Ethiopia <i>whenever the rainy season ends</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in Portugal give their mothers white roses. • The French celebrate Mother's Day like a family birthday. • In Mexico, more greeting cards are sent for Mother's Day than any other occasion. • In Serbia, children tie up their mother's feet with ribbons and only release her when she gives them little gifts. • In Japan, children between 6 and 14 honour their mother by entering a drawing of her in an art contest. Winning drawings are put in an exhibit that travels around the world.



Pair Work cont.

B. Question Sheet

Work with your partner to answer the following questions.
(You each have half of the information on your chart on one of the previous two pages.) Write your answers in your notebook.

1. When is Mother's Day in Canada?
2. Which country celebrates Mother's Day at the end of the rainy season?
3. In which two countries do children give their mothers white roses on Mother's Day?
4. Which country honours their mothers on International Women's Day in early March?
5. Which country celebrates Mother's Day on the last Sunday in May?
6. In which country do mothers often receive their breakfast in bed on Mother's Day?
7. When does Norway celebrate Mother's Day?
8. In which country do Mother's Day festivities last two or three days?
9. Which country celebrates Mother's Day in October?
10. Where do children honour their mothers by entering an art contest for Mother's Day?
11. Name a country that celebrates Mother's Day in December.
12. Which country is known for the large number of greeting cards that are sent for Mother's Day?
13. In which country do mothers receive a cake that is decorated like a bouquet of flowers?
14. What do Serbian children do to their mother on Mother's Day?
15. What does the Swedish Red Cross do on Mother's Day to help some women?

Vocabulary, Idioms & Expressions

A. Reference

Informal or Affectionate Terms Used for "Mother"

- ma
- mom
- mum
- mummy
- mommy
- mama

Different Types of Mothers

Type of Mother	Definition
birth mother	a person's biological mother, the woman who gives birth to the child
adoptive mother	a woman who has the legal right to raise a child that is not hers by birth
foster mother	a woman who looks after a child when the birth parents cannot do so
stepmother	a woman who is married to the child's father, but is not the birth mother
single mom (mother)	a woman who raises her child without the father
mother-in-law	the mother of one's husband or wife
grandmother	the mother of one's father or mother
great-grandmother	the grandmother of one's mother or father
stay-at-home mom (mother)	a mother who does not work outside the house
working mom (mother)	a mother who works outside the home
surrogate mother	a woman who carries and gives birth to a child for a woman who cannot give birth to a child herself
godmother	an honorary title given to a woman when a child is baptized in the church, she promises to provide good support to the child throughout his or her life





Vocabulary, Idioms & Expressions cont.


A. Reference cont.

Idioms & Expressions		
Idiom or Expression	Definition	Example
learn something at your mother's knee	to learn something when you are a young child	She learned to sew at her mother's knee .
be tied to your mother's apron strings	to not be able to think or act independently, to still need your mother	He is almost 30 years old and he's still tied to his mother's apron strings .
Mother Nature	the force that controls the natural world	There were so many trees blown down in last night's storm. It really shows you the force of Mother Nature .
mama's (mummy's) boy	a boy or man who allows his mother to have too much influence on him	Robert is a real mama's boy . He broke up with his girlfriend because his mother didn't like her.
mother tongue	one's native language, the language one learns as a child	Her mother tongue is French, but now she can speak more than four languages.
mum's the word	it's a secret, don't tell	The birthday party is a surprise, so mum's the word!
necessity is the mother of invention	if you really need something, you will invent or think of a way to get it	When Mary ran out of sugar, she tried using honey instead to bake her cake. It turned out to be the best cake she had ever made. Necessity really is the mother of invention.

B. Practice

Now write your own sentences in your notebook using the vocabulary and idioms on this and the previous page.

Listening

 <http://blog.esllibrary.com/2012/05/09/podcast-mothers-day/>

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

1. Many countries all over the world celebrate Mother's Day. Although not all countries have chosen the same date to _____ Mother's Day, children everywhere use this day to show how much they _____ their mothers.
 2. As with many other holidays, Mother's Day dates back to the time of the _____. Greeks and Romans. The Greek goddess of _____ and _____ was Rhea. Celebrations for Rhea occurred each spring and involved festivities with lots of flowers, honey cakes, and delicious wines. The Romans continued this _____ by celebrating Cybele, the mother of all their gods. The Christians later took this holiday and _____ it to a celebration of the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ.
 3. During the 1600s, England celebrated a holiday called Mothering Sunday. At this time, many of the poor people of England worked as _____ for the rich and lived far away from their own families. On Mothering Sunday, which was in the spring, the servants were given the day off to return home to spend time with their mothers. _____ and sweet raisin buns were very popular on this day.
 4. Two American women played an important part in bringing Mother's Day to the United States. In 1872, Julia Ward Howe first suggested the idea of Mother's Day in her city, Boston. A short time later, in 1908, a woman named Anna Jarvis wanted to _____ her own mother, so she convinced her town in West Virginia to hold a celebration for all mothers. She chose May 10, the _____ of her mother's death.
- Then Anna and her supporters began to write letters to ministers, businessmen, and politicians to try to establish a national Mother's Day. Her campaign was successful, and finally, in 1914, the president of the United States _____ Mother's Day a national holiday. It would be held every year on the second Sunday of May. By the end of Anna Jarvis's life, Mother's Day was celebrated in more than 40 countries around the world.
5. Although the traditional role of mothers has changed in many countries over the years, the role of _____ and caring for families remains. While different countries celebrate and recognize their mothers in different ways, many traditions are similar. Flowers, such as carnations and roses, have been an important part of Mother's Day for a very long time. Children of many different cultures also give their mothers cards, _____, and presents to show their love and appreciation. In some countries, children do the household _____ for the day, serve their mothers breakfast in bed, or take them to a restaurant for dinner. No matter where one lives, Mother's Day is the one day of the year when children young and old recognize and honour their mothers.

Answer Key

NOTE:

These activities are designed for high-intermediate-level adult ESL learners, but they may also be suitable for junior and senior high school ESL students.

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about the history and traditions associated with Mother's Day. Includes a comprehension check, a vocabulary review, and an information gap activity to do in group. Fun idioms are introduced.

LEVEL: Int – High Int

TIME: 2–3 hours

TAGS: holidays, Mother's Day, mother, mom, family, holidays, idioms, history, tradition, roles

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Discuss the questions as a class. Answers will vary.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 4. i | 7. h | 10. k | 13. b |
| 2. g | 5. n | 8. o | 11. e | 14. j |
| 3. l | 6. m | 9. a | 12. c | 15. f |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 10. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

- Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May.
- It originated in Greece.
- Celebrations for Rhea occurred each spring and involved festivities with lots of flowers, honey cakes, and delicious wines.
- The Christians later took this holiday and converted it to a celebration of the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ.
- On Mothering Sunday in the 1600s in England, servants were given the day off to return home to spend time with their mothers.

- Julia Ward Howe first suggested the idea of Mother's Day in her city, Boston.
- She chose May 10 because it was the anniversary of her mother's death.
- Anna and her supporters began to write letters to ministers, businessmen, and politicians to try to establish a national Mother's Day.
- In 1914, the president of the United States declared Mother's Day a national holiday.
- Children of many different cultures give their mothers cards, chocolates, and presents to show their love and appreciation. In some countries, children do the household chores for the day, serve their mothers breakfast in bed, or take them to a restaurant for dinner.

Vocabulary Review

B. CHOOSE THE CLOSEST MEANING

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 2. c | 3. b | 4. b | 5. c |
|------|------|------|------|------|

C. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1. convert | 3. delicious | 5. honour |
| 2. chores | 4. appreciate | |

(continued on the next page...)



Answer Key cont.

Pair Work

B. QUESTION SHEET

1. On the second Sunday in May
2. Ethiopia
3. Portugal and Spain
4. Russia
5. France
6. United States
7. On the second Sunday in February
8. Ethiopia
9. Argentina
10. Japan
11. Serbia
12. Mexico
13. France
14. Children tie up their mother's feet and only release her when she gives them sweets.
15. The Swedish Red Cross sells little plastic flowers and gives the money to women with very large families to go on vacation.

Vocabulary, Idioms & Expressions

B. PRACTICE

Answers will vary.

Listening

1. celebrate, appreciate
2. ancient, fertility, motherhood, tradition, converted
3. servants, Wildflowers
4. honour, anniversary, declared
5. nurturing, chocolates, chores