

WALT: understand the Scottish Festival of Hogmanay

Lesson 11

We have looked at different festivals over the past few weeks. Our final festival is Hogmanay, an old Scottish tradition.

Thousands of people gather in Edinburgh, in Scotland, every year for a big parade, food and fireworks.

They are celebrating Hogmanay - which is a Scottish word that means 'new year'. Hogmanay celebrations take place all over Scotland and last for three days, beginning at the end of December and ending on January 2nd.

There are lots of different stories as to how Hogmanay began, but many people think that some of the traditional Hogmanay celebrations were brought to Scotland by the Vikings in the 8th and 9th Century.

Fires were lit to ward off 'evil spirits' and celebrate the arrival of Winter Solstice. The first written mentions of "Hogmanay" come from 1604, although many of the traditions come from before that.



There are lots of traditions which people take part in to celebrate Hogmanay. One of the first is to clean the house and remove any old ashes in the fire - this is to symbolise clearing out the old year to welcome in the new one.

'First-footing' is also a tradition celebrated at Hogmanay.

To bring good luck to their homes, the first person through the door on Hogmanay should bring things like coal, shortbread or cake.



Fire and fireworks are a big part of Hogmanay celebrations, which link back to the idea of warding off 'evil spirits'.

A huge fiery parade usually takes place to mark the start of Hogmanay, where some people dress up in Viking clothing.

When the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve it is tradition for people to hold hands and sing 'Auld Lang Syne', the words to which were written by the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTCryF1J54Y>



Task 1 Use the text to answer the questions

1 - Where is Hogmanay celebrated?

2 - How long does the festival of Hogmanay last?

3 - What might a traditional 'First Footing' gift be?

4 - What might people dress up as during the Festival?

5 - Which poet wrote the words to 'Auld Lang Syne'?

Task 2 Fact Find

Find and draw these traditional Scottish things



The flag of Scotland



The national flower of Scotland



A traditional Scottish musical instrument