

## Teacher's Notes & Answer Key

<b>Level</b>	Upper Intermediate +
<b>Lesson Aims</b>	Learners will practice listening for gist and detail, and develop their vocabularies with the richness of idiomatic expression.
<b>Approximate Timing</b>	45-60 minutes
<b>Notes to the teacher</b>	<p>According to Wikipedia, <b>Midsummer</b>, also known as <b>St John's Day</b>, is the period of time centered upon the summer solstice, and more specifically the Northern European celebrations that accompany the actual solstice or take place on a day between June 21 and June 25 and the preceding evening. In Sweden, this is such an important festivity that there have been serious discussions to make the Midsummer's Eve into the National Day of Sweden, instead of June 6.</p> <p>The text is from the Swedish culture website, <a href="http://sweden.se">http://sweden.se</a>. While it's quite informative, it's also quite humorous and tongue-in-cheek!</p>
<b>Text Link</b>	<p><a href="https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/midsummer/">https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/midsummer/</a>          also available here:  <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_5100000/newsid_5102900/5102906.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_5100000/newsid_5102900/5102906.stm</a>          Quiz adapted from:  <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_5100000/newsid_5102900/5102906.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_5100000/newsid_5102900/5102906.stm</a></p>
<b>Image Links</b>	<p><a href="http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/North_season.jpg">http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/North_season.jpg</a>  <a href="http://news.bbcimg.co.uk/media/images/61024000/jpg/_61024166_henge6.jpg">http://news.bbcimg.co.uk/media/images/61024000/jpg/_61024166_henge6.jpg</a></p>

### Teacher's Notes

#### 1) LEAD-IN: QUIZ

Ask students to work individually on the quiz. Have students pair check, then unfold the flap for the answers. Some incorrect answers are explained. Elicit from class what anyone know about how Midsummer is celebrated in northern Europe, and board ideas in a word-web.

#### 2) GIST LISTENING (ATTITUDE)

Tell students they will practice listening for speaker's purpose, feeling, attitude and opinion. They will listen to a video guide entry on celebrating Midsummer in Sweden and must decide which adjectives you could use to describe the entry reader. They may tick (✓) more than one box.

ANSWERS: informative, humorous, tongue-in-cheek

### 3) DETAIL LISTENING (GAP FILL)

**Students** unfold the paper, read the questions, listen again and complete the gaps with a word or short phrase. All the answers come directly off the tapescript – there is no need to rephrase or paraphrase. Students pair check. If they struggle, give them the audio transcript to check. Then go over the answers with the class:

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. <b>their own drinks</b>        | 7. <b>(a bit of) practice</b>        |
| 2. <b>countryside</b>             | 8. <b>strawberry cake</b>            |
| 3. <b>kitchen</b>                 | 9. <b>egg (-) and (-) spoon</b>      |
| 4. <b>(short) (humorous) song</b> | 10. <b>a / the barbeque / grill</b>  |
| 5. <b>two beers</b>               | 11. <b>seven (different) flowers</b> |
| 6. <b>why</b>                     | 12. <b>March</b>                     |

### 4) LANGUAGE FOCUS (IDIOMS)

Direct students to match the idiomatic expressions(1-10) in **bold** from the tapescript with their meanings (A-J). Have students pair check, then go over the answers in WCFB.

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. D | 2. G | 3. E | 4. A | 5. F  |
| 6. B | 7. J | 8. I | 9. C | 10. H |

### 5) PRODUCTIVE TASK: Brochure

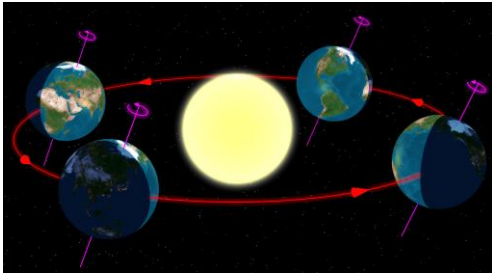
Set up the following writing task: Your hometown is hosting some visitors from a range of English-speaking countries. The tourist bureau in your hometown would like you to create a brochure/leaflet/information sheet about one of the annual celebrations that take place in your town. Name and describe the celebration, including what happens, where and when. Be sure to indicate what makes this celebration special, along with any cultural information that a tourist would find useful. Write your **brochure** in **220-260 words** in an **appropriate** style.

Follow-Up: Once brochures have been written, tack completed brochures to the classroom walls for a gallery read. Students may decide to vote on the best brochures (most descriptive, most informative, etc.) and give peer feedback.

## Student Worksheet 1

1) Answer the questions in this quiz. Compare your answers with a partner.

### Summer Solstice Quiz



**1. What is the summer solstice?**

- A. The longest day of the year
- B. The shortest day of the year
- C. When summer becomes autumn

**2. On which date does the summer solstice occur?**

- A. 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> June
- B. 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June
- C. 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June

**3. Which famous landmark do people visit during the summer solstice?**

- A. John O'Groats in Scotland
- B. Scarborough Castle in Yorkshire
- C. Stonehenge in Wiltshire

**4. Which of these is another name for the summer solstice?**

- A. Vernal Equinox
- B. Midsummer
- C. Litha



**5. People of which religion in particular celebrate the solstices?**

- A. Catholics
- B. Jews
- C. Pagans

**6. How old is Stonehenge?**

- A. 10,000 years
- B. 5,000 years
- C. 500 years

----- FOLD ----- FOLD -----

### KEY

- 1. **A** The shortest day of the year is the winter solstice, and the day when summer becomes autumn is the vernal equinox.
- 2. **B** The arrival of the solstice is highly predictable, down to the minute!
- 3. **C** John O'Groats is a village on the northern tip of the UK, while Scarborough Castle is a medieval fortress overlooking the North Sea.
- 4. **B** Litha is an Old English word used to describe Midsummer.
- 5. **C** The pagans were/are followers pre-Christian indigenous religion.
- 6. **B** Archaeologists believe that the area has been continually inhabited for nearly 10,000 years.

## Student Worksheet 2

2) You are going to listen to a video guide entry on celebrating Midsummer in Sweden. As you listen, decide which adjectives you could use to describe the entry reader. Tick (✓) any box that applies.

informative                       distrustful                       boastful                       humorous   
enthusiastic                       fearful                       tongue-in-cheek

----- FOLD ----- FOLD -----

3) Carefully read these notes about the Midsummer celebration in Sweden. Listen again and fill the gaps (1-12) with a word or a short phrase. There is an example (0).

Of all the celebrations in Sweden, (0) Christmas is the most important, but Midsummer is a close second.

The Swedes like to party, but they always bring (1) \_\_\_\_\_.

The ideal location to celebrate Midsummer is in the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ surrounded by trees and water.

If you can avoid it, don't go in the (3) \_\_\_\_\_.

Before you drink *nubbe*, you should always sing a (4) \_\_\_\_\_.

To improve your Swedish, drink (5) \_\_\_\_\_ for every shot of *nubbe*.

Nobody is quite sure (6) \_\_\_\_\_ people raise the maypole on Midsummer, but all the celebrants know how to do it.

The "little frogs dance" might look strange, but with (7) \_\_\_\_\_ you can do it well – and you may be rewarded with a slice of (8) \_\_\_\_\_.

Games of physical strength are popular, including:

- tugs-of-war
- horseshoe tossing
- (9) \_\_\_\_\_ races
- boot throwing
- apple bobbing

After the games, lots of Swedish men can be found in front of (10) \_\_\_\_\_.

If you lack a romantic partner in your life, pick (11) \_\_\_\_\_ and put them under your pillow – you may just dream about the person you will marry.

After all the Midsummer romance is over, it turns out a lot of local babies have their birthdays in (12) \_\_\_\_\_.

## Student Worksheet 3

4) Look at the idiomatic expressions (1-10) that occurred in the listening text. Match the expressions with their meanings A-J.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. just in case                   | A. something that no longer happens  |
| 2. at all costs                   | B. to watch someone's behavior, so as to keep them out of trouble                |
| 3. in a time-honored way          | C. following the words of an old story   |
| 4. a thing of the past            | D. to protect against something bad that could happen                            |
| 5. to do something in one's sleep | E. done in manner considered important because it has existed for many years     |
| 6. to keep an eye on someone      | F. to do something with no effort or conscious thought                           |
| 7. to bring out a ruthless streak | G. no matter what dangers or difficulties are involved                           |
| 8. hit the dance floor            | H. a large increase in the birth rate for a particular area at a particular time |
| 9. according to legend            | I. to be ready to show off your dance steps                                      |
| 10. a baby boom                   | J. to give reason to produce/show a bad personality trait                        |

----- FOLD ----- FOLD -----

5) Your hometown is hosting some visitors from a range of English-speaking countries. The tourist bureau in your hometown would like you to create a brochure about one of the annual celebrations that take place in your town. Name and describe the celebration, including what happens, where and when. Be sure to indicate what makes this celebration special, along with any cultural information that a tourist would find useful. Write your **brochure** in **220-260 words** in an **appropriate** style.

## Tapescript

A holiday devoted to eating, drinking, dancing and assorted pagan rituals, Swedish Midsummer is second only in significance to Christmas. This is a guide to making the most of it. First, buy everything in the starting kit. Remember, here everyone brings their own drinks. Make sure you get to the state-owned off-license in plenty of time, **just in case** you are whisked off to an island somewhere.

This is downtown Stockholm on Midsummer's Eve. If you can't bear the silence, or being on your own, stay away from the city. Midsummer is supposed to be celebrated in the countryside, surrounded by birch trees, fields and water. The first thing you need to do is make your own midsummer garland.

Avoid the kitchen **at all costs**. Some unfortunate soul always get stuck scrubbing the potatoes. Then it's time for a fabulous lunch of pickled herring and new potatoes spiced with dill and chives. You drink beer and *nubbe*, a Swedish vodka served ice cold in a shot glass. The *nubbe* must be consumed **in the time-honored way**: always preceded by a *nubbevisa*, a short humorous song. We recommend two beers per *nubbe*: this will improve both your singing and your Swedish.

No Midsummer is complete without a sudden downpour. Fortunately, it usually stops just as unexpected as it started. After lunch, it's time to raise the maypole, the ancient fertility symbol. Watch carefully and you should be able to work it out. The origins of Swedish Midsummer are unclear. For a millennium, it's been a celebration of summer and a fertility rite. Human sacrifices are **a thing of the past**, but revelers today are just as passionate. Like many Swedish traditions, the *why's* less important than the *how*.

Now the dancing begins. Everybody knows *små grodor*, the little frogs, locking your hands on your lower back and jumping like a frog may seem strange, but for at least one day of the year, it makes perfect sense to Swedes. It won't take long to master the dance steps. Swedes can **do it in their sleep**, and with a bit of practice so will you. The humiliation by dance is mercifully short-lived and you can count on your host to console you afterwards with a piece of strawberry cake.

Next, it's time to get physical, with tugs-of-war, horseshoe tossing, egg-and-spoon races, boot throwing, or apple bobbing. Since everyone takes part, you don't have to be embarrassed if you make a fool out of yourself. One caution: **keep an eye on grandma** – this sort of thing **brings out her ruthless streak**.

All this strenuous exercise calls for some real food: time for a barbeque. Since all Swedish men want to show off at the grill, this might be a good time to get to know some Swedish women. Anything can go on the grill: meat, fish, vegetables or fruit – there's definitely room for to experiment here.

Once you've eaten, you either have a quiet night, a sauna, a swim, a few drinks, pause for reflection, or you **hit the dance floor** with new and old friends. Be sure to listen to some *dans-band* music before Midsummer so you know what to expect. It takes a bit of getting used to. If you're lucky, there will be some ABBA too.

Generally speaking, Swedes are somewhat reserved. Tonight is the exception. Midsummer Eve is a night for romance. If you don't find or already have a partner, pick seven different flowers, put them under your pillow and **according to legend**, you will dream of the person you will marry. If you don't, you probably picked the wrong flowers. At Midsummer, the sun never completely sets: this is the longest day of the year. From now on it only gets darker, but there will be **a baby boom** to brighten up March.