EASTER – B2 level

WARM-UP

Answer the questions:

1. What do you know about Easter?
2. Do you celebrate Easter?
3. What do you do for Easter?

VOCABULARY

Match the words on the left with the words on the righ:

commemorate	earlier
inflict	conclusion
consequently	therefore
derived	cause
culmination	symbol
previous	remember
exclaim	declare
emblem	acquired

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READING

1. Easter celebrates the central event of the Christian faith: the resurrection of Christ three days after his crucifixion. It is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year. All Christian movable feasts and the entire liturgical year of worship are arranged around Easter.

2. The word Easter comes from Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love and fertility, also known as Astarte. Astarte became the Anglo-Saxon Ostara, goddess of fertility, spring and dawn. Easter was a pagan springtime celebration before it became a Christian holy day, and many non-religious elements form our celebrations.

3. Lent, a period of fasting and atonement, begins on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before Easter. At masses on this day, priests mark the foreheads of worshippers with ashes in the shape of a cross.
   Shrove Tuesday is the day immediately preceding the Lenten period; Palm Sunday, which celebrates Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem, is the Sunday before Easter.

4. Eggs have long been a symbol of rebirth in many cultures, and the exchange of eggs at Easter is a popular custom among both religious and secular observers of the holiday. In fact, the exchange of eggs is a custom that long predates Easter.

5. The rabbit first appeared as a symbol of Easter in 16th century Germany. And the first edible Easter bunnies were also produced in Germany, during the early 1800s. German settlers later brought the custom to North America. Originally, the hare was a pagan symbol of fertility and companion of the goddess Ostara.

6. Not until the Civil War was the message and meaning of Easter expressed as it had been in Europe. Presbyterians found the story of the resurrection of Christ a source of renewed hope following the death and destruction of the war.

7. The first confirmed European landing on Easter Island (Rapanui) was on Easter Day, 1722, by the Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen.

8. Easter baskets arose from the Catholic custom of bringing Easter dinner food to mass to be blessed. This custom may also be related to ancient agrarian customs of bringing first crops to the temple.

9. The council of Nice did in fact issue an edict in 325 AD that Easter must fall on a Sunday, but Palm Sunday celebrates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, where people

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spread palm branches and clothing before him. Maundy Thursday (or Holy Thursday) is the day to remember the Last Supper.

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10. The world's largest Easter egg, or pysanka, is located in Vegreville, Alta., Canada. The egg measures
9.4 metres high, 7 metres long and 5.5 metres wide—and weighs 2,270 kilograms. The complex design, built of aluminum, sits on its base at a 30-degree angle. The egg was created to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1974 and to celebrate Vegreville's ethnic heritage—a large percentage of the town's population is of Ukrainian Canadian descent.

QUIZ

1. **Easter is a celebration of...**
   - The resurrection of Christ
   - The crucifixion of Christ
   - The Last Supper

2. **The word "Easter" comes from...**
   - The white Esturian Flower that blooms this time of year
   - "Ostara," the Anglo-Saxon goddess of fertility
   - The word "East," referring to the rising sun and to spring

3. **Lent, the period that precedes Easter, begins on what day?**
   - Shrove Tuesday
   - Palm Sunday
   - Ash Wednesday

4. **The egg is a symbol of...**
   - Rebirth
   - Mourning
   - Fertility

5. **The Easter Rabbit was first introduced to North America following...**
   - The American Revolution
   - the Civil War
   - the Boston Tea Party

6. **When did the rabbit first appear as an Easter symbol?**
   - In 16th century Germany
   - When St. Patrick drove the snakes from Ireland
   - When the 18th century rabbit population in England reached dangerous proportions

7. **Where did Easter Island get its name?**
   - The island's shape was said to resemble an Easter bunny
   - The name of the island in the native language sounded like the word "Easter"
   - Europeans first landed on the island on Easter Day

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8. **Where does the custom of Easter baskets originate?**
   - From the baskets farmers would use to collect their crops
   - From the ancient Greek myth of Cornucopia, the horn of plenty
   - From the Catholic custom of bringing Easter dinner food to mass to be blessed

9. **Palm Sunday, one week before Easter, celebrates...**
   - The edict in 325 AD by the council of Nice that Easter fall on a Sunday
   - The commemoration of the Last Supper
   - The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem

10. **Where can you find the world's largest decorated Easter egg?**
   - Romania
   - Ukraine
   - Canada

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