

# Mother's Day Around The World

## 1. Before you read answer these three questions:

How do people celebrate Mother's Day in your country?

How do people celebrate Mother's Day in the USA?

Do you like Mother's Day? Why or why not?

## 2. Practice new vocabulary on quizlet. [Click here to practice.](#)

## 3. Read the article. Choose at least two countries to read about. You don't need to read about every country.

### Mother's Day Traditions Around the World

Adapted from Scholastic.com

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In many U.S. households, the second Sunday in May begins with breakfast in bed, a **bouquet** of flowers, homemade cards, and other tokens of **affection** for mom. Mother's Day — our country's version, at least — has been an official holiday since 1914. In other corners of the globe, honoring Mom is a **custom** with many **traditions** — some ancient, some surprisingly new.

"Most cultures celebrate mothers because they are traditionally the main caregiver, which comes with great responsibility," says Mei-Ling Hopgood, author of a book about parenting. In this article we take you on a quick trip around the world. We will explain how moms in five different countries are celebrated, and we will give some inspiration for your own Mother's Day.

## India: 10-Day Festival

**About India's Mother's Day:** Each October, Hindus honor Durga, the goddess of mothers, during the 10-day festival known as Durga Puja. The celebration is thought to date back to the sixteenth century and is considered both a religious ceremony and a time for family reunions. One story tells of Durga returning to her parents' home to show off her own children. Families spend weeks preparing food, gathering gifts, and decorating their homes for the festival.

**One idea for you:** Visit other moms you know, among both friends and family, and bring home-cooked goods to share.

## Japan: The Right Flowers

**About Japan's Mother's Day:** Following World War II, a version of Mother's Day grew popular as a way of comforting mothers who had lost sons to the war. You'll see **carnations** presented around this March holiday, as they symbolize the sweetness and **endurance** of motherhood in Japanese culture. Originally, children gave a red carnation to a living mother and displayed a white one if their mother had died. Now, white has become the traditional color.

**One idea for you:** Thank the moms in your community who help your family by writing notes of **gratitude**. Tie the notes to white carnations and leave the flowers on the moms' doorsteps.

## Ethiopia: Sing Along!

**About Ethiopia's Mother's Day:** The Antrosht festival, observed at the end of the rainy season in early fall, is dedicated to moms. After the weather clears for good, family members from all over flock to their homes for a large meal and celebration. Daughters traditionally bring vegetables and cheese, while sons supply meat. Together, they prepare food and sing and perform dances that tell stories of family heroes.

**One idea for you:** Share stories about all the women in your family. Go through your photo albums together and create a personal scrapbook of those special moms who've come before you.



## United Kingdom: A Church Custom

**About the United Kingdom's Mother's Day:** "Mothering Sunday" falls on the fourth Sunday of Lent. Back in the 1700s, the day was marked by young house servants returning home to spend time with their mothers. That custom **evolved** from an earlier one in which families who had moved away would return to the original church they attended. Today, the holiday remains connected to religion, with many churches handing out **daffodils** for children to give to Mom. Traditionally, girls also bake a fruitcake for their mothers.

**One idea for you:** Ask your family to celebrate you on Mother's Day by launching a new tradition based on one from your own childhood.

## France: Medals For Mom

**About France's Mother's Day:** In 1920, the government of France began awarding medals to mothers of large families in gratitude for helping **rebuild** the population after so many lives were lost in World War I. After the second World War, the government declared the last Sunday in May to be the Day of Mothers. The traditional gift is now a flower-shaped cake.

**One idea for you:** Awarding medals for bringing children into the world is obviously outdated, but expressing **gratitude** never goes out of style — especially when you're teaching the example to your children. Share your thankfulness for each family member at dinner and ask them each to do the same.

## 4. Answer the questions.

Compare Mother's Day in two countries from this article. What is similar?

Compare Mother's Day in two countries from this article. What is different?

What is one Mother's Day idea from this article that you want to try? Why?

## **6. Tell me what you learned.**

What was your favorite part of this activity?

What part of this activity was most difficult for you?

What did you learn?

What do you want to practice?