

Who is Santa Claus ... Really?



When I was a young boy, I knew exactly who Santa Claus was. He was a fat, friendly, old man with a long, white beard that visited my home once a year to put lots and lots of toys under the Christmas tree. He came only if my sister and I had been good – and only if we were asleep. Then, early the next morning, after we woke up, we ran downstairs to open all our gifts (I never understood why my parents always seemed so tired on Christmas morning). As I got older, however, I stopped believing in Santa Claus.

Many years later, I asked myself the question, "Who is Santa Claus ... really?" The answer surprised me. Santa Claus was a real person. He was a Greek man, a Christian called Saint Nicholas who lived about 1,700 years ago in the area that is now Turkey. He was famous because **he** gave many gifts to poor people. About a thousand years later, many people in Europe began the **tradition** of giving gifts to children to remember Saint Nicholas. The modern picture of Santa Claus – an old man dressed in red and white, with a long white beard – started about two hundred years ago in the United States and Canada. Nowadays, he is also known as Saint Nick, Father Christmas, Kris Kringle, Santy or just Santa. Saint Nicholas died a very long time ago but I like to believe that the real "Santa Claus" lives in all of us. He is the goodness and love in our hearts that reminds us that true happiness comes from giving to other people.

1. The article is about getting lots of toys for Christmas.
(a) TRUE
(b) FALSE
(c) It doesn't say.
2. What did the man do when he was a boy?
(a) He put lots of toys under a Christmas tree.
(b) He slept a lot at Christmas.
(c) He opened his gifts on Christmas morning.
3. When did the man stop believing in Santa Claus?
(a) when he was a boy
(b) when his sister told him that Santa Claus was not real
(c) when he grew up
4. Why was Saint Nicholas famous?
(a) He helped many people.
(b) He believed in Santa Claus.
(c) He lived in Turkey.
5. What does the word 'he' refer to?
(a) Turkey
(b) Saint Nicholas
(c) poor people
6. What does the word 'tradition' mean?
(a) how to remember things
(b) a way of doing something
(c) giving things to people
7. Who is Kris Kringle?
(a) a modern man
(b) Santa Claus
(c) It doesn't say.
8. When did Saint Nicholas die?
(a) about 1,700 years ago
(b) about a thousand years ago
(c) about two hundred years ago