Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits the gap.

ANCIENT SAMHAIN



Ancient Celts marked Samhain as the most **(1)** _____ [SIGNIFY] of the four **(2)** _____ [QUARTER] fire festivals, taking place at the midpoint between the fall equinox and the winter solstice. During this time of year, hearth fires in family homes were left to burn out while the harvest was gathered.

After the harvest work was complete, **(3)** _____ [CELEBRATE] joined with Druid priests to light a community fire using a wheel that would cause friction and spark flames. The wheel was considered a **(4)** _____ [REPRESENT] of the sun and used along with **(5)** _____ [PRAY]. Cattle were sacrificed, and **(6)** _____ [PARTICIPATE] took a flame from the **(7)** _____ [COMMUNE] bonfire back to their home to **(8)** _____ [LIGHT] the hearth.

Early texts present Samhain as a mandatory **(9)** _____ [CELEBRATE] lasting three days and three nights where the community was required to show themselves to local kings or chieftains. **(10)** _____ [FAIL] to participate was believed to result in **(11)** _____ [PUNISH] from the gods, usually **(12)** _____ [ILL] or death.

There was also a military aspect to Samhain in Ireland, with **(13)** _____ [HOLY] thrones prepared for **(14)** _____ [COMMAND] of soldiers. Anyone who committed a crime or used their weapons during the celebration faced a death sentence.

Some documents mention six days of drinking alcohol to excess, **(15)** _____ [TYPICAL] mead or beer, along with **(16)** _____ [GLUTTON] feasts.

Adapted from https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/samhain

LIVEWORKSHEETS