



Extra Training

Reading Task 1668

Match the headings 1-8 to the texts A-G. There is one header you don't need to use.

- 1. CHRISTMAS IN RUSSIA
- 2. CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
- 3. CHRISTMAS – A FAMILY CELEBRATION
- 4. CHRISTMAS WEATHER

- 5. CHRISTMAS DINNER
- 6. NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS
- 7. CRIME AT CHRISTMAS
- 8. CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

A. There are a lot of traditions connected with Christmas but perhaps the most important one is the giving of presents. Family members wrap up their gifts and leave them at the bottom of the Christmas tree to be found on Christmas morning. Children leave a long sock or stocking at the end of their beds on Christmas Eve, 24th December, hoping that Father Christmas will come down the chimney during the night and bring them small presents, fruit and nuts.

B. At some time on Christmas day the family will sit down to a big turkey dinner followed by Christmas pudding or Christmas cake. As for Christmas cake, heavy and overfilling it is not to everybody's taste. To make things worse, it takes weeks to make and when it is ready it can last until Easter, so if you don't like it, you have to try and eat some at Christmas to avoid being haunted by it months after.

C. Officially Christmas and New Year celebrations run from the 24th of December to the 2nd of January. However, for many Brits the Christmas marathon starts as early as the beginning of October with the first festive adverts on TV. The idea of Christmas shopping is that you spend as much money as you can on anything you cast your eyes on, preferably something neither you nor your family or friends will ever use. An average British family spends 670 pounds or more around the Christmas period.

D. Long live Christmas! -say pickpockets, car thieves and burglars getting their share of Christmas shopping. Every year thousands of people get their wallets stolen in overcrowded shops and streets. Lots of lovely presents, which somebody spent so much time and money on, disappear without a trace when cars and homes are broken into. As much as 9% of people experience a burglary in December.

E. Who doesn't want to have a white Christmas? Playing snowballs and making a snowman with the whole family on Christmas Day is most people's dream (apart from the countries like Australia that celebrate Christmas in summer, on the beach). This dream is more likely to come true in northern countries like Russia, but for the British people it's different. Although it's not uncommon to get some snow in Scotland and northern England, the rest of Britain is normally only lucky enough to get some frost. In most cases the weather is wet and gloomy.

F. New year is a time for celebrating and making a new start in life. In Britain many people make New Year's resolutions. This involves people promising themselves that they will improve their behaviour in some way, by giving up bad habits. People might decide to give up smoking, for example, or to go on a diet. These promises are often broken in the first few days of the New Year, however!

G. Christmas is celebrated on the 25th of December. For most families, this is the most important festival of the year. On this day many people are travelling home to be with their families. Most houses are decorated with brightly-coloured paper or holly, and there is usually a Christmas tree in the corner of the front room. Unfortunately, not all families get on well together. As it is a well-known fact, some magazines publish tips on how to cope with Christmas, such as yoga, meditation or holidays abroad.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G

