Reading Comprehension : Two

Celebration of the Ethiopian New Year

Ethiopia is a country that maintains its traditions because it has never been colonized. Therefore, most of the popular festivals in Ethiopia have ceremonial connotations. For example, the Ethiopian New Year, which is celebrated nationwide, involves various festivities.

The New Year festivities include family gatherings to enjoy the traditional Enqutatash meals and celebrate together by giving gifts, especially for children. The preparation begins long before the holiday. Each household has to save money to buy an animal (an ox (in groups), a sheep, a goat and/or a cock or hen) to slaughter on the day. Parents are also expected to buy clothes for all family members and, if possible, to renew and furnish their homes with new tables, chairs, and goods. Moreover, mothers need money to buy different ingredients and kitchen utensils to prepare typical Ethiopian dishes such as 'doro wat', 'dulet', 'key wot', 'kitfo', 'genfo', etc. for the holiday. They also prepare local drinks such as 'tej' and 'tella'.

Celebrations start on the Eve of Enqutatash. On this day, mostly Orthodox Christians light wooden torches - 'chibo' in Amharic - that symbolise the coming of the new season of sunshine and the

LIVEWORKSHEETS

end of the rainy season. They also attend church services and offer prayers ushering in the New Year.

As in several holiday celebrations around the world, food has a significant place in the celebration of Enqutatash. Therefore, the following morning, fathers slaughter the animal(s) they have bought for the holiday. Mothers, with the help of other family members, prepare and serve the meals and the drinks. Singing and dancing is also common to celebrate the New Year, especially among young girls. Young girls sing 'Abeba ayesh hoy' and receive gifts from every household.

Young boys also give a bunch of freshly-picked yellow flowers - 'Adey Abeba' - or paintings of flowers that symbolise the arrival of spring. Nowadays, these traditional gifts are gradually being replaced by greeting cards.

The Ethiopian New Year celebration may last for a week and revolve around family gatherings. It is a time of fun and joy for people.

Part I . Multiple Choice Questions:

Choose the correct answer for the following questions

1. Why has Ethiopia maintained many of its traditions?

A) It is a very old country
B) It is isolated from the world
C) It has never been colonized
D) It has a small population

2. What kind of meaning do most Ethiopian festivals have?

A) Religious
B) Political
C) Ceremonial
D) International

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. What is the name of the Ethiopian New Year in Amharic?

A) Fasika B) Meskel C) Enkutatash D) Timket

4. What do families do to prepare for the New Year celebration?

A) Travel to another city B) Fast for 10 days

C) Save money and buy animals D) Stay at home and do nothing

5. What are parents expected to buy for the family during the holiday?

A) Bicycles B) Clothes

C) Computers D) Books

6. What is commonly done to homes before the celebration?

A) Painted in white B) Closed for cleaning

C) Renewed and furnished D) Decorated with flowers

7. Which traditional Ethiopian dishes are mentioned in the text?

A) Injera and Pizza B) Doro wat, kitfo, key wot

C) Lasagna and Genfo D) Doro wat and sushi

8. What are 'tej' and 'tella'?

A) Tools used in farming B) Types of meat dishes

C) Local drinks D) Children's games

9. What does ‘chibo’ symbolize in the New Year celebration?

A) The start of school

B) The rainy season

C) The end of the rainy season and coming of sunshine

D) The arrival of guests

LIVEWORKSHEETS

10. Who usually lights the 'chibo'?

A) Muslims B) Orthodox Christians

C) Tourists D) Government workers

11. What activity is common among young girls during the celebration?

A) Selling flowers B) Singing and dancing

C) Playing football D) Writing essays

12. What song do young girls often sing?

A) Happy Birthday B) Ethiopia Hoy

C) Abeba Ayesh Hoy D) Adey Adebabay Hoy

13. What do young boys give as a gift?

A) Cakes B) Money

C) Adey Abeba flowers or paintings D) Candles

14. What are these yellow flowers (Adey Abeba) a symbol of?

A) Summer B) Wealth C) Spring D) Freedom

15. How long does the Ethiopian New Year celebration usually last?

A) One day B) Three days C) A week D) A month

Part II. Select **True** or **False** for the questions below

1. Ethiopia was colonized by Britain.
2. Enkutatash is celebrated only by adults.
3. Parents buy clothes and household items for the holiday.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

4. Tej and tella are types of traditional dances.

5. Families gather together during the celebration.

6. Girls receive gifts for singing.

7. The celebration always lasts one day.

8. Boys give out yellow flowers.

9. The rainy season begins during Enkutatash.

10. Doro wat is one of the special holiday dishes.

LIVEWORKSHEETS