***British Traditions and Customs***

British nation is considered to be the most conservative in Europe. It is not a secret that every nation and every country has its own customs and traditions. In Great Britain people attach greater importance to traditions and customs than in other European countries. Englishmen are proud of their traditions and carefully keep them up. The best examples are their queen, money system, their weights and measures.

There are many customs and some of them are very old. There is, for example, the Marble Championship, where the British Champion is crowned; he wins a silver cup known among folk dancers as Morris Dancing. Morris Dancing is an event where people, worn in beautiful clothes with ribbons and bells, dance with handkerchiefs or big sticks in their hands, while traditional music- sounds.

Another example is the Boat Race, which takes place on the river Thames, often on Easter Sunday. A boat with a team from Oxford University and one with a team from Cambridge University hold a race.

British people think that the Grand National horse race is the most exciting horse race in the world. It takes place near Liverpool every year. Sometimes it happens the same day as the Boat Race takes place, sometimes a week later. Amateur riders as well as professional jockeys can participate. It is a very famous event.

There are many celebrations in May, especially in the countryside.

Halloween is a day on which many children dress up in unusual costumes. In fact, this holiday has a Celtic origin. The day was originally called All Halloween's Eve, because it happens on October 31, the eve of all Saint's Day. The name was later shortened to Halloween. The Celts celebrated the coming of New Year on that day.

Another tradition is the holiday called Bonfire Night.

On November 5,1605, a man called Guy Fawkes planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament where the king James 1st was to open Parliament on that day. But Guy Fawkes was unable to realize his plan and was caught and later, hanged. The British still remember that Guy Fawkes' Night. It is another name for this holiday. This day one can see children with figures, made of sacks and straw and dressed in old clothes. On November 5th, children put their figures on the bonfire, burn them, and light their fireworks.

In the end of the year, there is the most famous New Year celebration. In London, many people go to Trafalgar Square on New Year's Eve. There is singing and dancing at 12 o'clock on December 31st.

A popular Scottish event is the Edinburgh Festival of music and drama, which takes place every year. A truly Welsh event is the Eisteddfod, a national festival of traditional poetry and music, with a competition for the best new poem in Welsh.

If we look at English weights and measures, we can be convinced that the British are very conservative people. They do not use the internationally accepted measurements. They have conserved their old measures. There are nine essential measures. For general use, the smallest weight is one ounce, then 16 ounce is equal to a pound. Fourteen pounds is one stone.

The English always give people's weight in pounds and stones. Liquids they measure in pints, quarts and gallons. There are two pints in a quart and four quarts or eight pints are in one gallon. For length, they have inches» foot, yards and miles.

If we have always been used to the metric system therefore the English monetary system could be found rather difficult for us. They have a pound sterling, which is divided into twenty shillings, half-crown is cost two shillings and sixpence, shilling is worth twelve pennies and one penny could be changed by two halfpennies.

***Exercise 1***

***Match the following words and translations, write***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| to be considered | короновать |
| to attach | взорвать, подорвать |
| to keep (past kept, p.p. kept) up | одевать, носить |
| to crown | уделять |
| to wear (past wore, p.p. worn) | поддерживать, хранить |
| to blow up | считаться, рассматриваться как |
| to catch (caught) | убеждать, уверять |
| to hang (past hung, p.p. hung) | повесить |
| to convince | схватить, арестовать |
| customs | носовой платок |
| ribbon | любитель; поклонник; любительский |
| handkerchief | традиции |
| rider | лента, ленточка; тесьма |
| amateur | всадник, наездник; жокей |
| event | происхождение; начало |
| countryside | солома |
| origin | событие |
| straw | обыкн. мн. фейерверк |
| bonfire | соревнование |
| firework | сельская местность |
| competition | костер |
| proud | важнейший; необходимый; основной |
| folk | возбуждающий, волнующий |
| essential | народный (относящийся к обычаям, традициям простого народа) |
| exciting | действительно, по-настоящему |
| truly | гордый |
| ounce | галлон (мера жидких и сыпучих тел = 4,54 л) |
| pound | пинта (мера емкости; в Англии = 0,57 л; в США = = 0,47 л для жидкостей) |
| stone | унция (- 28,3 г) |
| pint | кварта (единица измерения объема жидкости; равняется а/4 галлона — 2 пинтам) |
| quart | мн. обыкн. неизм. стоун (мера веса, равен 14 фунтам, или 6,34 кг) |
| gallon | фунт (современная мера веса, используемая в англоговорящих странах; = 453,6 г) |
| inch | мн. ч. неизм. фут (мера длины, равная 30,48 см) |
| foot | английская миля (\*= 1609 м) |
| yard | дюйм (= 2,5 см) |
| metric system | фунт стерлингов (денежная единица Великобритании, равнялась 20 шиллингам, или 240 пенсам; с 1971 г. = 100 пенсам) |
| pound sterling | ярд (мера длины, равная 3 футам или 914,4 мм) |
| mile | метрическая система |
| shilling | мн. репсе, pennies (об отдельных монетах) пенни, пенс |
| halfpenny | полкроны (монета в 2 шиллинга 6 пенсов) |
| penny | полпенни |
| half-crown | шиллинг (англ. серебряная монета = 1/20 фунта стерлингов — 12 пенсам) |
| Easter Sunday | лодочные гонки |
| Celtic | Пасхальное Воскресенье |
| Boat Race | кельтский |
| All Halloween's Eve | Ночь костров |
| Eisteddfod | Канун всех святых (сокр. Хэлло-уин) |
| Bonfire Night | ежегодный фестиваль бардов (в Уэльсе) |

***Exercise 2***

***Answer the questions***

1. What nation is considered to be the most conservative in Europe?

2. What are the best examples of their conservatism?

3. What are the most popular English traditions?

4. What is the original name of Halloween?

5. What is a popular Scottish event?

6. What is the Eisteddfod?

7. What peculiarities of the English monetary system do you know?

***Exercise 3***

***Translate into English, using words from the text***

1. Не секрет, что каждая страна имеет свои традиции
2. Англичане считаются самой консервативной нацией в Европе.
3. Есть много древних английских традиций.
4. Британцы думают, что большие национальные гонки на лошадях — самая захватывающая гонка в мире
5. Много праздников в мае, особенно в сельской местности.
6. Хэллоуин – праздник кельтского происхождения.
7. В день костра дети помещают свои фигурки в костер и сжигают их, затем зажигают свои фейерверки.
8. В Лондоне многие люди на празднование кануна Нового года приходят на Трафальгарскую площадь. Там в 12 часов ночи 31-го декабря они поют и танцуют.
9. Эдинбургский Фестиваль музыки и драмы — ежегодный популярный шотландский праздник.
10. Британцы не используют международную, принятую во всем мире систему мер. Они сохранили свои старые меры.