21 CULTURE CHALLENGE

210 ZDAŃ Z KLUCZEM



Polish Holidays







LANGUAGE CORNER

JOANNA TOMCZUK

Polish Holidays

Set 1: Christmas



Complete the sentences below with words from the table. Use each word only once.

Eve	hay	wafer	retreat	baubles	cherished	charity
Santa	dishes	Boxing	enter	Mass	poppy-seed	borscht
Poles	decorations	carols	mistletoe	nativity	star	plate

1.1

a) In Poland, Christmas is the most _____ time of the year for believers and non-believers alike.

b) Christmas is a time for _____ , meeting friends and family, as well as being kind and generous to others.



c) In December many people go to church to attend an Advent _____.

d) The first Christmas lights and _____ can be seen in shop windows even in November.

e) Christmas in Poland starts with a traditional Polish supper called *Wigilia* on Christmas _____ , 24th December.

f) _____ believe that how you spend *Wigilia* determines how you will spend the year to come, so the day should be perfect.



g) At Christmas, people love singing _____ to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

1.2

a) On the morning of 24th December, families decorate Christmas trees with _____ , trinkets and dried fruit. Many glass balls are handmade and beautifully painted.

b) People usually prepare twelve _____ in honour of the twelve apostles.

c) Some _____ should be put under the white tablecloth as a symbol of the Nativity in the stable.

d) There should also be an extra seat and one empty _____ left for a stranger.

e) Poles start *Wigilia* when the first _____ appears in the sky. This commemorates the Star of Bethlehem.

f) On 24th December, the first person to _____ the house should be a man and this guarantees prosperity.

g) Don't forget to hang _____ in your house for harmony and brotherhood. If you accidentally stand under the mistletoe with someone, you must kiss them.



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1.3

a) Before Christmas Eve Supper, families break off pieces of holy _____ and express good wishes to each other. There is also a special pink wafer for animals that are believed to talk at midnight.

b) When it comes to the dishes, there should be twelve of them. In the past, the supper was meat-free, but nowadays, it's changing. The most popular dishes are: mushroom soup, fish soup and red _____ (beetroot soup). The beetroot soup contains finely chopped forest mushrooms wrapped in pasta, *barszcz z uszkami*. You can also try: *pierogi*, small pasta packets filled with chopped cabbage and mushrooms, sour cooked cabbage with yellow split peas, or various fish, e.g. fried carp/trout, baked salmon or a herring salad.



c) If you have a sweet tooth, you can try *makiełki* – noodles with nuts, orange peel, honey and poppy seeds. Also popular are: cheesecake, ginger cake, gingerbread cookies, _____ cake, or *kutia* – grains of barley/wheat, various nuts and ground poppy seeds with some honey. You can drink compote made from dried fruit like prunes, apples and pears.

d) After supper people sing Christmas carols. It's also a time for _____'s visit (usually someone from the family dresses up as Santa). In other houses, the gifts are placed under the Christmas tree.

e) At midnight on 24th December, many people go to church for Midnight _____ , which is called *Pasterka*. The most beautiful carols that are sung are: *Cicha noc* (Silent Night), *Lulajże, Jezuniu* (Lullaby for Jesus) and *Bóg się rodzi* (God is Born).

f) In Poland, Christmas Eve (24th) and Christmas Day (25th) are equally important, but _____ Day (26th) is celebrated too.



g) During the Christmas season _____ plays are performed throughout the country.



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Polish Holidays

Set 5: All Saints' Day



Complete the sentences below with words from the table. Use each word only once.

cemeteries	skin	Saints	renovation	passed	weather	Souls
light	traffic	aired	beliefs	graves	neat	reflection
home towns	dinner	candles	thread	laundry	nameless	masses

5.1

a) All _____' Day is an annual bank holiday in Poland.



b) On that special day, many Poles go back to their _____ to remember their late relatives.

c) This day is often known as 'the day of _____'.

d) People buy flowers (most popularly, chrysanthemums), wreaths and lanterns, and then visit _____.

e) Collectively, Poles place millions of votive candles on the _____. The lanterns come in a wide variety of colours, styles and prices. The lantern is called a *znicz*.

f) Graveyards are really magical in the evening as a sea of _____ glows, giving a warmth to the cool air.

g) Each year, a hot topic for discussion is what the _____ will be like on 1st November. Everyone hopes for a 'golden Polish autumn' with warm weather when the ground is covered with beautifully coloured leaves.



5.2

a) In many places the _____ is really heavy, and the routes are often diverted and managed by the police on that day.

b) Near the cemeteries you can buy some hot food (sausages, *bigos*), and *obwarzanki*, which are similar to small pretzels, fastened on a _____.

c) Another popular treat exclusively available outside cemeteries on 1st November is *pańska skórka*, the 'lord's _____', which is a traditional candy wrapped in parchment paper, mainly in the Mazowsze region.

d) The Poles also visit the graves of their idols, such as poets, musicians, actors, celebrities and soldiers, as well as the _____ or the abandoned ones. Nobody should be forgotten on that day.

e) In almost every graveyard, money is collected for charity and the _____ of historic graves. Celebrities, actors and film directors are usually involved in this event.

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f) Each cemetery has a cross under which you can _____ a candle or leave a rose for those without a physical grave.

g) All Saints' Day is a very formal holiday. People wear their best clothes, and the grave has to be clean, _____ and tidy. It should look cared for. That's why people clean them in advance and take this responsibility really seriously.



5.3

a) Families gather to eat _____ or have high tea and remember their beloved ones, tell stories and look through old photo albums.

b) Another important day is 2nd November, which is called All _____' Day, but it's not a bank holiday.

c) In churches, special _____ are held when people pray for the souls of their deceased relatives.

d) There is also a custom of showing on TV all the famous people who _____ away in the previous year. Their photographs are accompanied by melancholy music.

e) The same film is _____ on TV every year – people never get bored with it. This beloved Polish film is *Znachor (The Quack)* with J. Bińczycki and A. Dymna.

f) The origin of this tradition can be traced back to ancient Slavic _____ known as *Dziady*, during which people would burn large bonfires and prepare food and drink for visiting souls.

g) Never put your _____ out to dry on 1st or 2nd November. There is an old belief that souls wander the earth on these nights, and if you leave your linen out to dry, they may become entangled in the bedsheets. When this happens, the following year they will return and take back a family member to the other side.



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Long Answer Key

Set 1: Christmas

1.1

a) In Poland, Christmas is the most **cherished** time of the year for believers and non-believers alike.

b) Christmas is a time for **charity**, meeting friends and family, as well as being kind and generous to others.

c) In December many people go to church to attend an Advent **retreat**.

d) The first Christmas lights and **decorations** can be seen in shop windows even in November.

e) Christmas in Poland starts with a traditional Polish supper called *Wigilia* on Christmas **Eve**, 24th December.

f) **Poles** believe that how you spend *Wigilia* determines how you will spend the year to come, so the day should be perfect.

g) At Christmas, people love singing **carols** to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

1.2

a) On the morning of 24th December, families decorate Christmas trees with **baubles**, trinkets and dried fruit. Many glass balls are handmade and beautifully painted.

b) People usually prepare twelve **dishes** in honour of the twelve apostles.

c) Some **hay** should be put under the white tablecloth as a symbol of the Nativity in the stable.

d) There should also be an extra seat and one empty **plate** left for a stranger.

e) Poles start *Wigilia* when the first **star** appears in the sky. This commemorates the Star of Bethlehem.

f) On 24th December, the first person to **enter** the house should be a man and this guarantees prosperity.

g) Don't forget to hang **mistletoe** in your house for harmony and brotherhood. If you accidentally stand under the mistletoe with someone, you must kiss them.

1.3

a) Before Christmas Eve Supper, families break off pieces of holy **wafer** and express good wishes to each other. There is also a special pink wafer for animals that are believed to talk at midnight.

b) When it comes to the dishes, there should be twelve of them. In the past, the supper was meat-free, but nowadays, it's changing. The most popular dishes are: mushroom soup, fish soup and red **borscht** (beetroot soup). The beetroot soup contains finely chopped forest mushrooms wrapped in pasta, *barszcz z uszkami*. You can also try: *pierogi*, small pasta packets filled with chopped cabbage and mushrooms, sour cooked cabbage with yellow split peas, or various fish, e.g. fried carp/trout, baked salmon or a herring salad.

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Short Answer Key

Set 1: Christmas

1.1	1.2	1.3
a) cherished	a) baubles	a) wafer
b) charity	b) dishes	b) borscht
c) retreat	c) hay	c) poppy-seed
d) decorations	d) plate	d) Santa
e) Eve	e) star	e) Mass
f) Poles	f) enter	f) Boxing
g) carols	g) mistletoe	g) nativity

Set 2: New Year

2.1	2.2	2.3
a) Eve	a) raise	a) phrases
b) Poles	b) old year	b) quit
c) dishes	c) celebration	c) bread
d) worries	d) champagne	d) man
e) debts	e) custom	e) poppers
f) hits	f) happiness	f) fireworks
g) wallet	g) bank	g) hats

Set 3: Valentine's Day

3.1	3.2	3.3
a) Roman	a) chocolates	a) Lupercalia
b) lovers	b) heart	b) dinners
c) signed	c) exchange	c) Chełmno
d) sender	d) admirer	d) looking
e) blind	e) means	e) Cupid
f) Doves	f) relics	f) feel
g) mine	g) seeds	g) kiss

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