# CELEBRATIONS

## Indigenous Celebrations

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When a word is printed in **bold**, click on it to find its meaning.
Birthdays are special events that many people celebrate.

New Year’s Eve is celebrated all around the world with fireworks.

Celebrations are events that are held on special occasions. Some are events from the past that are still celebrated. Others celebrate important times in our lives, or activities such as music.

Some celebrations involve only a few people. Others involve whole cities or countries. Large celebrations take place across the world.
What are Indigenous celebrations?

Indigenous people are the first people to live in a country or region. Indigenous celebrations are events that celebrate the **culture** and **traditions** of Indigenous people.

Indigenous celebrations often use stories, songs and **ceremonies**. These have been passed from older people to younger people over time.

Many Indigenous Australians celebrate ways of life that are thousands of years old.

Indigenous people from Canada and America perform ceremonies that have been passed down over many years.
Indigenous celebrations in the past

Many Indigenous celebrations have been held for thousands of years. Some are religious celebrations. Others celebrate the harvest or the coming of spring.

Old pictures show how some Indigenous people celebrated in the past.

Many Indigenous celebrations stopped when new settlers brought their own ways of celebrating. Now, many Indigenous people perform their own celebrations again. This keeps their culture alive.

Indigenous celebrations can help young people learn about their history.
International Day of the World’s Indigenous People

The International Day of the World’s Indigenous People is held on 9 August every year. The United Nations meets to celebrate Indigenous people from around the world.

Performances by Indigenous people at the United Nations meeting are part of the celebration.

The aim of this day is to improve the lives of the world’s Indigenous people. This involves many events and activities.

Some Indigenous people hold ceremonies on the International Day of the World’s Indigenous People.
Tadua Kaamatan, Malaysia

Tadua Kaamatan is a harvest festival. It is held by the Indigenous people of Sabah in Malaysia. Tadua Kaamatan takes place at the end of May every year.

Tadua Kaamatan is celebrated with music and dancing. Traditional food and drink are also part of the celebrations, along with games and sports.

Buffalo racing is one of the events held at Tadua Kaamatan.
NAIDOC Week celebrates Australia’s Indigenous people. It takes place every year in July. All Australians are encouraged to celebrate NAIDOC Week.

Each year, NAIDOC Week has a special theme. A different Australian city hosts a big celebration called a ball. At the ball, special awards are presented.

Some Indigenous Australians march through the streets during NAIDOC Week.

NAIDOC Week celebrations include Indigenous dance performances.
Garma Festival, Australia

Garma Festival celebrates the Yolngu (say *Yol-ng-oo*) people of northeast Arnhem Land in Australia. The Yolngu have lived there for more than 40 000 years.

Garma Festival is held in early August each year. It celebrates the Yolngu’s way of living. Songs and ceremonies keep their traditions alive.

People come from all over Australia to celebrate Garma Festival.

The Yolngu perform traditional dances at Garma Festival.
American Indian Heritage Month celebrates the Indigenous people of America. It takes place during November and involves exhibitions, storytelling and other activities.

During the month, Indigenous people visit schools to teach children about their culture. They talk about the problems facing the Indigenous people of America.

Dance performances are part of American Indian Heritage Month.

School children learn about the Indigenous people of America during American Indian Heritage Month.
The talking stick is a traditional item used in Canadian Aboriginal gatherings.

The Talking Stick Festival celebrates the work of the Aboriginal artists of Canada. It is held each February in Vancouver. Aboriginal artists from all over Canada take part.

The Talking Stick Festival includes many different types of dance, music, painting and storytelling. Both famous and new artists take part in the festival.

The children of the Rainbow Drum Group perform at the Talking Stick Festival.
**Inti Raymi, Peru and Ecuador**

Inti Raymi is a festival held in Peru and Ecuador. Inti Raymi means ‘festival of the sun’ and celebrates the summer. It dates back to the time of the **Incas**.

For hundreds of years, Spanish **settlers** did not allow people to celebrate Inti Raymi. Since 1944 it has been celebrated again every year. Inti Raymi includes parades, barbecues and bonfires.

In Peru, the ruins of Incan buildings are used as a stage for the festival.

Parades are an important part of the Inti Raymi festival.
Zindala Zombili, South Africa

Zindala Zombili is one of the largest African festivals. It celebrates the Indigenous people of South Africa. Zindala Zombili takes place from April to June.

Many people dress in traditional costumes for the Zindala Zombili festival.

Zindala Zombili celebrations include music and dance. Artists come from across Africa to join in. They put on shows and enter dance and music competitions.

Traditional African dances are an exciting part of Zindala Zombili.
Wairoa Maori and Indigenous Film Festival, New Zealand

The Wairoa Maori and Indigenous Film Festival celebrates films made by the Maori people of New Zealand. It also celebrates films made by Indigenous people around the world.

The festival takes place in June. Each year the festival has a special theme. Film-making workshops are an important part of this festival.

Indigenous film-makers discuss their films with the audience.

The festival gives prizes to the films voted the best.
Spring Equinox Festival, Mexico

The Spring Equinox Festival celebrates the first day of spring. Mexicans celebrate at the El Castillo pyramid. It was built by the Mayans more than 500 years ago.

At the pyramid, people watch a shadow that looks like a snake. The shadow represents a Mayan snake god. The Mayans believed the shadow was a sign to plant their crops.

El Castillo is the largest pyramid in Mexico.

Thousands of people gather to watch the snake’s shadow move down the El Castillo pyramid.
Try this!

Try this quiz

Find the answers to these questions in the book. (You can check your answers on page 32.)

1. What does the Talking Stick Festival celebrate?
2. When is the International Day of the World’s Indigenous People?
3. Where is Inti Raymi celebrated?
4. Who celebrates Tadua Kaamatan?
5. How is Garma Festival celebrated?

Try this activity

Next time you celebrate a special occasion with your friends or family, ask yourself:

• Why are you celebrating?
• How long have people been celebrating this event?
• Are there other places in the world where people celebrate the event?
## Glossary

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>the first people who lived in Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awards</td>
<td>prizes given for performing well in a particular area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceremonies</td>
<td>activities that are performed on special occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culture</td>
<td>way of living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equinox</td>
<td>the time of year when day and night are equal lengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harvest</td>
<td>when the fruits and vegetables on farms are gathered or picked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incas</td>
<td>the Indigenous people of what is now western South America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayans</td>
<td>the Indigenous people of what is now Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pyramid</td>
<td>a building with a square bottom and sides that come together to form a point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settlers</td>
<td>people who go to live in a new country or place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theme</td>
<td>main idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditions</td>
<td>activities and beliefs handed down from older people to younger people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>an organisation many countries belong to</td>
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<tr>
<td>workshops</td>
<td>classes where people are taught skills</td>
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Answers to the quiz on page 30

1 The work of the Aboriginal artists of Canada
2 On 9 August each year
3 Peru and Ecuador
4 The Indigenous people of Sabah in Malaysia
5 With dances, songs and ceremonies