



How will you
grow this year?

DAY 12

Evergreens (from the Old English word *aefie* meaning “always” and *gowan* meaning “to grow”) have been symbols of eternal life and rebirth since ancient times.



What does 'being
saintly' mean?

Santa Claus is based on a real person, Bishop Saint Nicholas of Smyrna, , who lived during the fourth century. Born in Patara (in modern-day Turkey), he is the world’s most popular non-Biblical saint, and artists have portrayed him more often than any other saint except Mary.

Day 11



What gifts can
you give that come
from your heart
and not a store?

DAY 10

DAY 9



What is your
favorite
holiday
decoration?

The earliest known
Christmas tree decorations
were apples. At
Christmastime, medieval
actors would use apples to
decorate paradise trees.



Most of Santa's reindeer have male-sounding names, such as Blitzen, Comet, and Cupid. However, male reindeers shed their antlers around Christmas, so the reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh are likely not male, but female or castrati.



Do you hang a stocking? Why, or why not?

The idea of hanging stockings out on Christmas Eve is believed to have come from Amsterdam, where children leave out their shoes on St. Nicholas's Eve in hopes that he will fill them with goodies.

But where did the people of Amsterdam get the idea? Perhaps from St. Nicholas himself.

One of the most popular stories surrounding the saint concerns his generosity to the three daughters of a poor family. It seems the daughters were of marriageable age, but could not marry because they had no dowry.

Nicholas heard of their plight and set out to help them. In the middle of the night, Nicholas threw bags of gold coins down the girls' chimney. The bags landed in the girls' stockings, which they had hung out to dry.



DAY 6

Do you hang mistletoe in your home during Christmas?

Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) is from the Anglo-Saxon word *mistel-tan*, which means “little dung twig” because the plant spreads through bird droppings. It was also believed that the dung from which the mistletoe grew would also possess “life-giving” power. If a couple in love exchanges a kiss under the mistletoe, it is interpreted as a promise to marry, as well as a prediction of happiness and long life and fertility.

DAY 5



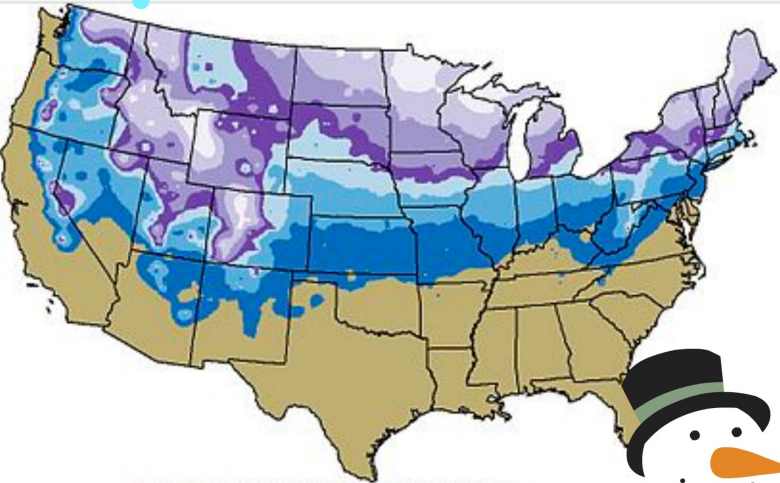
Have you ever tried Wassail, a traditional Christmas drink?

Wassail is from the Old Norse *ves heill*, meaning “good health.”

4 cups apple cider
1 cups orange juice
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 whole cinnamon sticks
6 whole cloves, or 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
Combine all ingredients in a large pan.
Bring to simmer over medium-low heat. Reduce heat and continue simmering for 45 minutes. Ladle into cups or mugs and enjoy!

DAY 4

Do you have snow where you live at Christmas? What are your chances?



DAY 3

What Christmas story do you like the most?

In Poland, spiders or spider webs are common Christmas trees decorations because according to legend, a spider wove a blanket for Baby Jesus. In fact, Polish people consider spiders to be symbols of goodness and prosperity at Christmas.



DAY 2



What have you done to help others have a Nice Christmas?

Many European countries believed that spirits, both good and evil, were active during the Twelve Days of Christmas. These spirits eventually evolved into Santa's elves.



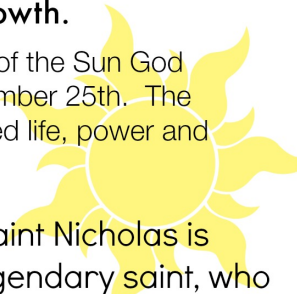
Christmas Eve

What symbol do you celebrate?
What do they all have in common?



Jesus' birth is a symbol for many people of hope, love, kindness & being with family forever. It is also a symbol of new life and growth.

Winter Solstice: The celebration of the Sun God by the ancient Romans on December 25th. The sun symbolized growth, continued life, power and strength.



Santa Clause, or Saint Nicholas is celebrated as a legendary saint, who performed acts of service and kindness to save other's lives, give to the poor and helpless. Today, he is believed to give gifts to people around the world on Christmas Eve.