



## Special Occasions

### Task 1: How Birthdays Started

#### Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening for the GESE 5.

You are going to hear a talk about **how birthdays started**. You will hear the talk twice. As you listen, write down some notes about what you hear, if you want to. I will ask you six questions on some facts about **how birthdays started**. Are you ready?

#### Audio Script

Birthday parties are often filled with balloons, birthday hats, cupcakes, ice-cream, birthday cake with candles and birthday presents! But have you ever thought about how when we started celebrating birthdays? The Egyptians started birthdays, when the pharaoh's celebrated their coronation. However, the Greeks were the ones that started to put candles on moon-shaped cakes. They did this to celebrate and give tribute to their goddess Artemis. The Romans were the first to celebrate birthdays for the common men, but not women. Women didn't celebrate until the 12th century. When a roman man celebrated his fiftieth birthday, a special cake was made out of wheat flour, olive oil, honey and grated cheese. Germany is the country that first had birthdays, most similar to today's birthdays. They celebrated for children, with cakes and candles, where they would put the amount of candles of the age of the child, and add an extra candle for hope. They would blow out the candles and make a wish.

Now I will ask you some questions. You only need to answer in a few words.

Now let's look at the questions again, but with the possible answers.

This is the end of the listening task.

#### Questions & Answers:

1	What are some things that we can find at birthday parties?	balloons / birthday hats / cupcakes /, ice-cream / birthday cake / candles / birthday presents
2	Who started birthday celebrations?	The Egyptians
3	What shape were the cakes that the Greeks made?	moon / like a moon / moon-shaped
4	Why did the Greeks put candles on the cakes?	To celebrate / Give tribute (to the goddess Artemis)
5	Who were birthdays celebrated for in Rome?	men (/ not women)

6	What are some of the ingredients in a special cake made for somebody turning 50 in Rome?	wheat flour / olive oil / honey / (grated) cheese
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Marks: +\_ / +6

**Note:** The questions are concentrated so that the student learns how to understand form questions with “What was / is / can...?” and “When was / did...?” You must remind the student that “do” is an auxiliary verb at times and will at times not be able to translate into their language. The auxiliary verb is also known as a helping verb and this term may make the student understand better that the helping verb is helping the verb that comes after be grammatically correct in English.

Translations don’t always translate easily. This is when you must guide a student in the understanding of the translation. For example, if your student is Spanish, observe how the questions of “When did...?” changes when translated.

Question 1: What are...? = ¿Qué son...?

Question 2: Who...? = ¿Quién...?

Question 3: What shape...? = ¿Qué forma...?

Question 4: Why did...? = ¿Por qué...?

Question 5: Who were...? = ¿Quién era...?

Question 6: What are...? = ¿Qué son...?

You can also help the student understand question structures here. Some students understand structures better and others are more visual. So, it could be a good idea to colour code the different parts of grammar.

For example:

Red → Nouns

Green → Verbs

Blue → Adjectives

Orange → Adverbs

Purple → Prepositions / Articles

Pink → Pronouns

Yellow → Conjunctions

Brown → Interjections

Turquoise → Punctuation marks

**Question 1:**

What are some things that we can find at birthday parties ?  
 Interjections + verb + pronoun + noun + relative pronoun + pronoun + verb + verb + preposition + adjective + noun ?



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→ Have students write a list of specific vocabulary and phrases from listening Look at audio script for highlighted specific vocabulary and phrases.

→ Have them write their own questions about New Years that later can be used in a speaking activity with another classmate.