

A Trip Around the World

Pilot: Welcome passengers! I will be flying you to a few countries today to let you see what their winter celebrations look like. Are you ready to go?

Kids: (yeah!)

Narrator: Oh! I want to come. Where are we going first?!

Start walking to the Hanukkah table

Pilot: We will be flying to Israel to learn about Hanukkah. Now fasten your seatbelts and turn your voices all the way off for takeoff!

Start walking toward the Hanukkah table

Narrator: Where is Israel located?

Pilot: Israel is in Asia, the largest continent in the world.

Narrator: Is that the same continent where China and Japan are located?

Pilot: Yup! Here we are... Israel everyone.

Narrator: This is so exciting!

Hanukkah presents

Presenter: Welcome to Israel! This is our Hanukkah celebration. Hanukkah is also called the festival of lights. During the 8 days of Hanukkah, people light candles in a candle holder called a menorah.

Narrator: Why do they light candles?

Presenter: Many years ago, some enemies came and destroyed their temple and blew out the special oil lamp that continuously burned in the temple because they did not want them to pray anymore. Some brave people stood up for them and ran their enemies out of the country.

Narrator: Why do they celebrate for 8 whole days?

Presenter: They celebrate for this long because when they lit their special lamp again, they were worried because they didn't have a lot of oil. To their surprise, their oil lasted for 8 days.

Narrator: That is a great story! What is that food on the table?

Presenter: Oh, those are latkes. Which are yummy, potato pancakes.

Narrator: That sounds delicious! What are those toys?

Presenter: These are small tops called dreidels. They play a game with the dreidels and sometimes earn chocolate coins.

Narrator: Do you give presents on Hanukkah? I know all of these children are wondering.

Presenter: Oh, yes! Sometimes children get small gifts on each of the 8 days of Hanukkah, and some get one large gift on the first night. We also like to give money to help those who do not have food or warm clothes during this time of year.

Pilot: This looks like a great celebration! Since we are pretty close, let's visit Japan to see how they celebrate the Japanese New Year!

Walk to Japanese New Year

Narrator: Wait...New Years? Aren't we skipping Christmas?

Presenter: Well, we celebrate the Japanese New Year on December 31st. Families gather to watch TV and eat noodles. These noodles are a symbol of a long life. They eat them hoping that their life will be stretched as long as the noodles.

Presenter: When it is close to midnight, they ring a bell in a temple 108 times to keep evil away. It takes a whole hour to complete ringing the bell. Another way to keep away evil is to laugh at midnight.

Presenter: On New Year's Day, Japanese people complete a ritual called hatsu-mode. This means they gather at temples and pray for a happy and healthy year.

Presenter: They eat special meals of boiled beans, fish, and vegetables.

Presenter: Another popular food is rice cakes with an orange on top. Typically it is tradition for families to send each other greeting cards and children receive money in decorated envelopes.

Presenter: You will see Japanese families decorate their homes in bamboo and green plants. They are symbols of new life and honesty. They may also have wreaths with oranges on their doors.

Pilot: Wow! There is a lot of information about the Japanese New Year but we must get going to Holland. We have quite a way to travel!

Walk to the Holland/St. Nicholas Day table

Narrator: Where is Holland?

Pilot: Holland is located in The Netherlands in Europe. You will see a celebration called St. Nicholas Day.

Narrator: Who is St. Nicholas?

St. Nicholas Presentation

Presenter: St. Nicholas is a bishop in the Catholic church who was very good to children. He has a long, white beard and wears red pants, a long red coat, and a tall, red hat. He carries a golden rod and visits homes to deliver treats and gifts.

Narrator: OH! I want gifts!

Presenter: Well not everyone gets a gift. Legend has it that Black Pete travels with St. Nicholas and threatens to carry off bad children in his bag.

Narrator: YIKES! I think I would behave extra well if I lived in Holland.

Presenter: Here you will see a Sinterklaas party. It kind of sounds like Santa Claus and is another name for St. Nicholas. We have a treasure hunt for gifts.

Presenter: We have to leave our shoes on the doorstep so that he can fill them with surprises!

Narrator: Oh...um...I don't think St. Nicholas would want to touch my stinky shoes.

Presenter: We also leave hay and carrots for his horse.

Narrator: Wait...are those...

Presenter: Yup, those are sweets. Please eat some!

Narrator: Oh, I couldn't. We have to get going. Thank you for offering. I hope Black Pete doesn't come and carry you away in a bag! Thanks for letting us visit!

Start walking to St. Lucia table

Pilot: We don't have far to go this time. Sweden is also in Europe. We will be seeing a St. Lucia celebration.

Narrator: Oh! This is one of my favorites. It brings light to one of the darkest days of the year.

St. Lucia group presents

Presenter: St. Lucia was a Christian who was killed because of her beliefs. Many years after her death, someone saw a vision of her, wearing a crown of lights and carrying food for the hungry.

Narrator: How do you celebrate?

Presenter: In the morning, the oldest girl in each family dresses like St. Lucia, in a long white robe with a red sash. She wears a wreath of candles on her head.

Presenter: Then there is a parade. Boys dress as Starboys, holding stars on sticks. They sing through the streets and pass out sweet rolls to people in houses.

Presenter: The girls bring her parents coffee and sweet rolls with raisins for breakfast.

Narrator: That is so cool!

Pilot: I'm sorry passengers, but we don't have much time. We have to get to Germany.

Walk to Christmas table

Pilot: Ah! Here we are. This looks familiar.

Christmas presents

Presenter: We are celebrating Christmas! Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus in a stable many years ago. After he was born, three wise men brought him gifts. This is why Christmas is celebrated the way it is.

Presenter: The advent season starts four weeks before Christmas. This is when outdoor markets open to sell food and gifts. Homes display advent wreaths and advent calendars to count down the days until Christmas.

Narrator: I never knew that!

Presenter: We eat sausage and salad. It's tradition to eat as much as you can on Christmas Eve to keep the bad dreams away.

Presenter: Over here we have a Christmas tree. We have decorated it with apples, candy, and lights

Presenter: Here are some letters we wrote to Christkind. She will bring us presents in the morning.

Narrator: Oh, it's like in America where children write to Santa Claus.

Presenter: Actually, some children in Germany write to Santa Claus too.

Pilot: I hate to rush you, but we have to get to Spain!

Start walking toward the 3 Kings Day table

Narrator: Spain?!

Pilot: Yes, we will see how people celebrate Three Kings' Day. It is a celebration of the three wise men that followed a star and brought gifts to baby Jesus in the stable.

Narrator: What do they do to celebrate?

Three Kings' Day presents

Presenter: First, children write letters to the three kings to let them know what gifts they want to have. Then on the night before Three Kings' Day, a big parade arrives. Then the children put their shoes under the tree and by morning their shoes are filled with treats and gifts.

Narrator: Again with the shoes! Who fills them? Do they do this on Christmas?

Presenter: The Three Kings' fill them of course! And, no. It is after Christmas and New Year's Day and it marks the end of the Christmas season. The next day, the families gather for breakfast.

Narrator: There is a lot of food involved with these celebrations.

Presenter: What is special about Three Kings' Day is that there is a cake with something baked inside, like a small toy. Whoever finds it as they eat their cake will have good luck for the next year!

Narrator: Unless they of course swallow the toy then...

Pilot: I'm sure that doesn't happen that often. It's time to go to our next celebration.

***Walk to Tropical Christmas table**

Narrator: This looks a lot like Christmas

Presenter: It is a lot like Christmas, actually but it is celebrated in the middle of their summer. Children are out of school from mid December to early February. So they wear shorts and bathing suits at Christmas!

Presenter: Australians decorate their homes with Christmas bush which is a green tree with white flowers. By Christmas, the flowers turn to a shiny red.

Presenter: They also hang wreaths on their front doors and decorate their homes with colorful lights.

Narrator: Wait...do they sing Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow because well...there's no snow.

Presenter: They do since traditional Christmas carols, but they change the words.

Presenter: They have a barbeque or picnic for their meal. They eat ham, seafood, deli meats, pasta, salad, fruit, and ice cream.

Narrator: I bet it's Rudolph the Sweaty Reindeer...

Presenter: Actually, Santa comes in on kangaroos! They are called "6 white boomers". The children leave pillow cases for Santa to fill. Then the next day, Boxing Day, people spend time with their family and friends on the beach or watching cricket matches.

Pilot: I am sweating. We need to go back to America.

Narrator: Wait...does that mean we are done celebrating?

Pilot: No, we have one more! Kwanzaa! Let's go!

Walk to Kwanzaa table

Narrator: Kwanzaa? What?

Kwanzaa Presents

Presenter: Kwanzaa is a week long holiday that means first fruits. It is a time for African Americans to think about and be thankful for their heritage.

Presenter: Through the week, families use a candle holder called a kinara that holds 7 candles. There is a black candle in the middle surrounded by three green candles and three red candles. Each candle has a meaning.

Presenter: The colors stand for something. Red stands for the blood that was shed as our people fought for freedom. Black stands for the color of our skin. Green stands for the future.

Presenter: Families buy a special gift so that we can remember this amazing week of celebration and thankfulness. We also eat A LOT of food.

Narrator: Why are there three ears of corn on the table?

Presenter: Corn is a symbol for children. So you put one ear of corn for each child you have. This is a unity cup. Family members drink out of this cup as a symbol of togetherness.

Presenter: Then we eat a big meal of ham, yams, and green.

Pilot: This looks like a great celebration! Happy Holidays! We are going to head back now! When we get back to Ms. Folk's room please sit on the blue rug and be REALLY quiet.

Walk back to Ms. Folk's room

