

# CHRISTMAS IN GREAT BRITAIN



Janek Jarosz 1B

# Traditions

## Christmas crackers

- These festive table decorations are pulled apart to reveal a small gift, a party hat and a riddle or a joke at Christmas parties, lunches and dinners in the UK. They were invented by a London sweet maker called Tom Smith in 1845-1850. He got the idea from French 'bon bon' sweets (almonds wrapped in paper), but added a small saying or riddle within the wrapping of his sweets. They didn't sell well at first, so to make them more popular, he created a bang. He added tiny fireworks and launched a new range of crackers called 'Bangs of Expectation!' in 1861. And so the Christmas cracker was born.



# Traditions

## The Queen's speech

- The Queen's Christmas message is always one of the most watched programmes on TV on Christmas Day. A whopping 24 million people tuned in last year. The tradition was actually started by the Queen's grandfather, King George V. The tradition carried on, and in 1957, the Queen gave the first televised Christmas speech. Unfortunately the Queen died so probably King Charles will be giving Christmas speeches from now on.



# Traditions

## Eating turkey for Christmas lunch

- Although turkeys are not native to the British Isles (they were first brought to Britain in the 16th Century), people in the UK love to eat turkey for Christmas dinner. The tradition started when farmers would be in need of their cattle for milk and would often be saving their chickens to lay eggs. Before eating turkey, British people would often eat geese, boar and even peacock .



# Traditions

## Mistletoe

- The tradition of hanging mistletoe in the house goes back to the times of the ancient Druids. It is supposed to possess mystical powers which bring good luck to the household and ward off evil spirits. Today, kissing under the mistletoe is a great tradition that appears to have first caught on in the 18th century among servants in England before spreading to the middle classes. As part of the early custom, men were allowed to steal a kiss from any woman caught standing under the mistletoe, and refusing was viewed as bad luck.



# Traditions

## Christmas Carol singing

- The British love singing, and singing is part of English life. Christmas carols are familiar to almost everyone, Christian or not. Carol-singing is a tradition that continues, groups of young or not so young stand in the street, or go from door to door, singing carols and collecting for a charity. There are also carol-singers in many major shopping streets and malls in the days before Christmas. Away from the street, almost all churches organize some form of Carol Service, which attracts many more than just regular worshipers. The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols from the chapel of King's College, Cambridge University, is one of the great musical events of the year for BBC television.



# Traditional dishes

- Roast turkey – turkey with vegetables
- Christmas Pudding – a festive dessert made with dried fruit, nuts and alcohol
- Mince pies - a traditional English Christmas cookie filled with dried fruit
- Scottish broth with lamb
- Cherry Trifle - light dessert made of biscuits soaked in wine, layered with fruit jelly

