

1. Halloween

Halloween was originally a Celtic festival for the dead, celebrated on the last day of the Celtic year, October 31. One story says that, on that day, the spirits of all those who had died throughout the preceding year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. Naturally, the still-living did not want to be possessed. So, on the night of October 31, villagers would put out the fires in their homes, to make them cold and undesirable. They would then dress up in all manner of devilish costumes and noisily parade around the neighbourhood, in order to frighten away spirits looking for bodies to possess. The custom of "trick-or-treating (when children go from house to house on Halloween to get Small presents) is thought to have originated with a ninth-century European custom called 'souling where early Christians would walk from village to village begging for 'soul cakes', made out of square pieces of bread with currants.

2. Independence Day

Independence Day is the national holiday of the USA commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. At the time of the signing, the US was under the rule of England's King George III. There was growing protest in the 13 colonies concerning the taxes that had to be paid to England. King George sent extra troops to help control any rebellion (восстание). In April 1775 the King's troops reached Concord. The battle of Concord would mark the beginning of the war for Independence. By June 1776 a committee was formed to compose a formal declaration of independence. Thomas Jefferson was chosen to write the first draft which was presented to the Congress.

3. Carnival

The Origins of Carnival are unclear, but most agree that it started as a pagan (языческое) celebration in ancient Rome or Greece. In Brazil, Carnival rules the country for four days a year. It happens at the peak of summer, attracting thousands of visitors from all corners of the world. Carnival changes dates every year but it usually happens some time in February or early March. Carnival is supposed to be a time to 'forget or recall an old love affair, to celebrate new passion or search for new romantic experiences'.

4. Guy Fawkes' Night

In 1605, Guy Fawkes and a group of his supporters attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament to kill the King, James I and the entire Parliament. The conspirators were angered because King James had been forcing Jesuits to leave England. The plotters (заговорщики) wanted to take power away from the king and return the country to the Catholic faith. However, in an attempt to protect a friend, one of the group members sent an anonymous letter warning him to stay away from the Parliament. The warning letter reached the King, and the conspirators were caught and sentenced to death.

Прочитайте тексты. Ответьте на вопросы. Выберите номер текста, отвечающего на вопрос.

Which festival / celebration followed a formal political agreement?

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